

Wild Ohio

M A G A Z I N E

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY

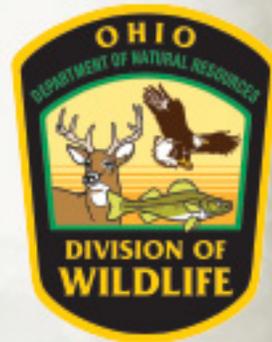


WARBLERS

SMARTPHONE BIRDING APPS | SAUGER FISHING | 75 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

ZODY NAMED CHIEF OF DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Newly-appointed Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Director James Zehringer has named Scott A. Zody as chief of the ODNR Division of Wildlife. Zody has served the department in a number of pivotal roles, including the department's interim director and assistant director since January 2011, as well as previous positions including deputy director and legislative liaison. His career in public service extends to the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation, and Legislative Service Commission. Zody is an avid hunter and angler and is dedicated to improving opportunities for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.



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 Columbus, OH 43229-6693
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 1-800-750-0750
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FOR THE BIRDS

SPONSOR-A-BIRD AUCTION

The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II and the Ohio Ornithological Society have created a sponsor-a-bird auction to generate funds for the Atlas. During the next few months, they will be auctioning each species that will have a full account in the published Atlas. Winning bidders will be recognized by name as the official sponsor on the species account in the book. Through your sponsorships, they will be able to lower the printing costs of the Atlas to an affordable price for everyone. Now is your opportunity to join other Ohioans in this exciting program.

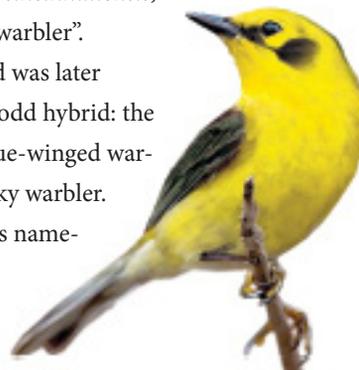
Visit their website today
ohiobirds.org/obba2 or
 call them at (614) 247-6458
 for more details on how to
 bid on your favorite bird!



DID YOU KNOW...

For a short while, Ohio's Queen City had a bird named in its honor. While exploring woods near Cincinnati in 1880, Dr. Frank Langdon noticed an unfamiliar songbird foraging in a maple. As was the habit of early ornithologists, Langdon collected the mystery bird with his shotgun. Thinking it to be a new species, Langdon formally named the bird *Helminthophaga cincinnatiensis*, the "Cincinnati warbler".

Langdon's bird was later proven to be an odd hybrid: the offspring of a blue-winged warbler and Kentucky warbler. And Ohio lost its name-sake species.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE

WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
Wild Ohio Magazine

- **Inland Walleye** • **Impact of Asian Carp** • **Turkey Hunting**
- **Ballville Dam Removal** • **Old Woman Creek Renovations**
- **The Art of Taxidermy . . . and Much More!**

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DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

The mission of the Division of Wildlife is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all.



WildOhio

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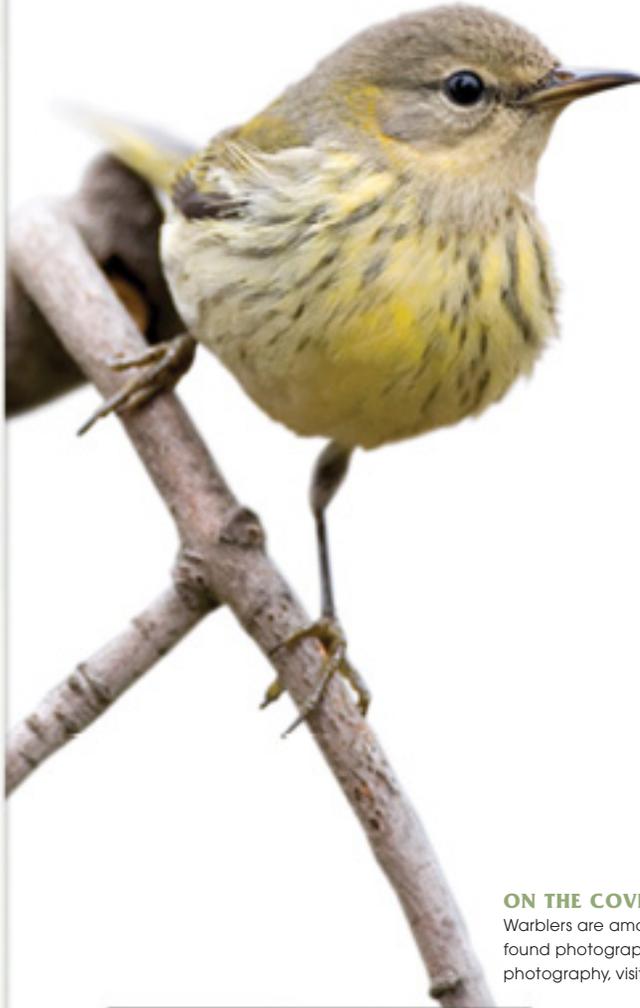
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VOLUME 23, NUMBER 1

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This story began 100 years ago as the westward expansion of America came to an end.

ON THE COVER: PROTHONOTARY WARBLER *Photo by Brian Zwiebel*

Warblers are among Brian's favorite subjects - most of the month of May he can be found photographing warblers at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area. To view more of Brian's photography, visit brianzwiebelphotography.com.

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BLUEGILL
TONY DEMARCO



ZOO AND PARTNERS RECEIVE HONORS

RECIPIENT OF THE 2011 ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS NORTH AMERICA CONSERVATION AWARD

A decade ago the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, along with the Wilds, The Ohio State University (OSU), the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department founded the Freshwater Mussel Conservation and Research Center (FMCRC) to assist in the propagation and conservation of highly endangered freshwater mussel species. Housed at the Scioto Jeffrey Park, a 32-acre peninsula off of the Scioto River near the Zoo, the FMCRC has a unique system that pumps water from the river and circulates it through a series of filters, providing a natural food source and appropriate water chemistry for the 1,257 adult mussels housed in holding raceways. The center also contains a juvenile rearing system, a dedicated host identification room, host fish spawning and rearing systems, and an office/laboratory room that can accommodate tours, school groups, and work areas.



PHOTO BY G. JONES
COURTESY THE COLUMBUS ZOO & AQUARIUM



TAKE TICK CARE WHEN HEADING OUTDOORS

The blacklegged tick and the lone star tick are becoming more common in Ohio. These two species of ticks can transmit disease including Lyme disease and ehrlichiosis. Outdoor enthusiasts should take precautions as they feel necessary. To have a suspect tick identified, it should be saved in a hard container such as a pill bottle or film canister. Ticks may be taken to a local health department or mailed to the Ohio Tick Survey, Zoonotic Disease Program, 8995 East Main Street, Building 22, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068. Containers should be mailed as soon as possible after collection. Be sure to include the following information: name, address, and phone number; date tick was collected; Ohio county where it was collected; and indicate whether or not the tick was attached to a person or animal.



bit.ly/Ohticks

To learn more visit www.odh.ohio.gov and search the A-Z index using the word "tick."

LAST MINUTE LICENSE SALES

Anglers can now call to purchase one-day and three-day fishing licenses using the newly implemented license and game check system. Customers have two telephone options to purchase a "last-minute" fishing license using a credit card. Callers should be sure to have their nine-digit customer identification number, which can be obtained at no cost from the Division of Wildlife's Wild Ohio Customer Center at wildohio.com.

- ▶ Call **1-866-703-1928** between 5 a.m. and midnight to reach a live operator who will walk you through the transaction (*\$5.50 fee is included with this option*).
- ▶ If you have a customer ID number, call **1-855-765-3474** anytime for an **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)** system. (*The IVR option includes a \$3.25 convenience fee.*)

ERWINE RECYCLES LINES

Thanks to an ambitious project by northeast Ohio students, anglers have an outlet to recycle their fishing line responsibly. A 5th grade class at Erwine Intermediate School, which is part of Coventry Township Schools, has started a fishing line recycling program. Students started the project, with the oversight of teacher Mike Staiger, to fulfill the requirements of a Disney Planet Challenge. The businesses listed below have agreed to host recycling stations for this project – please call ahead to confirm regular business hours. After the project is completed in the spring, the collected line will be sent to Berkley Conservation Institute (part of Berkley fishing) for recycling. The project goal is to recycle one mile worth of fishing line, but hopefully with the help of the anglers of northeast Ohio, the students will be able to meet and exceed this goal!

GANDER MOUNTAIN

4938 Portage Street NW • North Canton
(330) 498-0995

WAL-MART

(Arlington Road)

2887 South Arlington Road • Akron
(330) 645-9556

LONG LAKE BAIT AND TACKLE

855 Portage Lakes Drive • Akron
(330) 245-6114

PORTAGE LAKES BAIT AND TACKLE

354 Portage Lakes Drive • Akron
(330) 644-0316

ERWINE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

1135 Portage Lakes Drive • Akron
(330) 644-2281

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE DISTRICT 3 OFFICE

912 Portage Lakes Drive • Akron
(330) 644-2293



OHIO TEAM PLACES FIRST IN THE WORLD

Logan Hocking Middle School's archery team traveled to Florida in October to compete in the 3rd annual National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) World Tournament. They were honored with a first place award in the middle school team division. In individual scoring, Cody Bush from Philo Middle School shot his way to first place male middle school shooter.

Student archers across Ohio are once again taking aim for this year's top honors at Ohio's National Archery in the Schools Program's State Tournament. The tournament will be held in conjunction with the Arnold Sports Festival in Columbus Ohio. More than 1,000 archers are expected to participate at the 5th annual competition held at Veteran's Memorial Hall on March 2, 2012. For more information visit ohionasp.com.

Wildlife CALENDAR

March 7

**OHIO WILDLIFE DIVERSITY
CONFERENCE**
wildohio.com

March 10

**OHIO AMPHIBIAN
CONFERENCE**
ohioamphibians.com

March 16-18

**OHIO DEER AND
TURKEY EXPO**
deerinfo.com

March 24

**SHREVE SPRING
MIGRATION SENSATION**
shrevemigration.org



Don't forget to
mark on your
Wild Ohio
calendar!

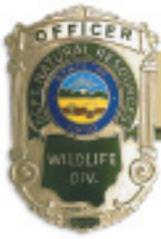
wildohio.com
for up-to-date events

RECYCLED ANTLERS

The Division of Wildlife's Wildlife Management Group in central Ohio collects antlers from confiscated deer, road kills, and crop damage permits. When the collection reaches capacity, the antlers are receipted to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. The zoo provides the antlers to its bears as well as other gnawing animals as a treat and diet supplement.



PHOTO BY G. JONES
COURTESY THE COLUMBUS ZOO & AQUARIUM



WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT

FIELD NOTES



WHITE-TAILED DEER
VANESSA FITZWATER

There is no question that hunters and anglers are a lawful lot (and the “bad apple” saying can go without saying this time). Each year regulations for fishing and hunting are acquired, read, re-read, and even called-in for confirmation. Still, some questions need clarification. This edition of Field Notes is dedicated to answering questions that wildlife officers are asked on a regular basis...

Q. If I shoot a deer, and it runs onto another person’s property, what do I need to do to retrieve it?

A. Hunters need permission to enter private property. Period. If a deer is shot, and crosses onto property that you do not have permission to enter, you cannot proceed to retrieve that deer. This is much easier said than done – especially when you are in the act of tracking your trophy. So prepare for success – and failure. Know who owns adjacent property and where the property boundaries are. Meet your neighbors before your hunt, especially if you plan to set-up near a property line. If you do not have permission to retrieve a deer once it crosses a property line, you will need to consider each shot carefully, and take only the ones that count. If adjacent landowners do not allow you to enter their property, respect their wishes.

Q. I have permission to hunt a friend’s property, but they will not give me written permission.

Can I still hunt on that property?

A. Yes, but remember that written permission not only protects a hunter, it protects a landowner as well. The law states you must have written permission to hunt, trap or fish on private property. Written permission carried by a sportsman is proof of a landowner’s consent should any problems with trespassers arise on the property. Likewise, written permission can protect a landowner from trespassers. Permission forms are available in the hunting digest, online, and by calling 1-800-WILDLIFE or any wildlife district office.

Q. I shot a deer just before legal shooting hours ended. What if I can’t locate it that night?

A. Hunters can see some really good action right around sunset, but it becomes harder to see anything after dark. Tracking (on property where you have permission) your deer is important, but there comes a time when the hunt is best continued during daylight hours. When checking a deer, the deer must be reported by 11:30 on the day it was harvested. It is not uncommon for a hunt to last for more than one day – the hunt is complete (the deer is harvested) when it is in your possession. Hunters who harvest their deer after a hunt that is more than one day should enter the date they come into possession of their deer when reporting a harvest. If you accidentally enter the wrong date, there is no way to change that information. Instead, be honest when an officer contacts you and tell them the entire story.

Q. Can I still bowhunt during deer-gun season?

A. Yes, bowhunting is permitted during the deer-gun seasons, including; youth gun, traditional gun, bonus gun weekend, and muzzleloader season. All hunters (except waterfowl hunters) that are in the field during any deer-gun season are required to wear hunter orange.





BEHIND THE BADGE



If you grew up dreaming of living and working in the vast wilderness of North America, a daily beat in Ohio might seem tame. Sometimes it takes a different perspective to keep things interesting. Gauga County may not be the Badlands, but Scott Denamen offers a unique view of his corner of northeast Ohio – from the eyes of a wildlife officer.

I focused my Swarovski's and adjusted the ghillie suit, shifting my legs slightly to keep them from cramping. I had been in this spot since before dawn and the day was better than halfway over. The hatchery trucks were delayed, but that hadn't changed anything. I had already planned on being here until dark. Another bite of jerky and then start glassing the crowd again. Their faces had already become familiar. Most of them arrived early to claim their usual spots. They had marked this day on the calendar well in advance. Some on their smartphones or iPads. Tuesday before Thanksgiving – trout stocking day at Punderson Lake. Fishing could be slow this time of year. Steelhead had been scarce. Perch were biting when you could get on the lake, but it was starting to get cold and you needed a boat. At Punderson, the hatchery puts the fish right in front of you, and the bite was usually pretty good. If you could stand the cold

wind off the lake, you had a good chance of getting your limit...and sometimes more. That's where I come in.

I shifted my eyes between the far shore and my notepad. The fish fed slowly at first, but once they got going things picked up quickly. The first few limits had already gone up the hill to the parking lot, most of the fishermen opting to get their five and head home. I watched for any that returned, but mainly just focused on keeping up with the count. Two on at once to the left of the

dock. Watch the man on the right. Blue jacket, red bucket – colors helped keep track of who had caught what. This would be his fifth. It's a good fish. Fights hard before it finally comes to the net and into the bucket. The man checks his rig and casts again. He's in a good spot, and three more go into the bucket before he starts to pack up. I had begun slowly moving back into the brush after fish number six. By number seven I was behind a large deadfall, flexing some feeling back into my legs. When I saw the man getting ready to leave, I headed for my truck to shed the ghillie suit. Now it was a matter of getting around the lake before the man left. A quick pull from the water jug and some more jerky on the way around. It had been a long day, and with any luck, I'd be home for dinner in a couple of hours.

I got to the parking lot just as the man popped over the steep bank. The bucket looked heavy in his hand. Greetings are exchanged, questions are asked, and the fish are dumped in a pile. Eight. The limit is five. The man knows he's caught. He'll still go home with a limit, it'll just cost more. A citation is written. I stick around to check some more stringers as they come over the bank. The air turns cooler as the sun sets below the trees, time to head home.



WARBLERS

by Jim McCormac
Avian Education Specialist, Ohio Division of Wildlife

A famous case of the post WWII Cold War era involved alleged communist sympathizer Alger Hiss. In 1948 Hiss was subjected to serious grilling before the House Un-American Activities Committee, spearheaded by Senator Joseph McCarthy. Hiss denied any communist involvement. Pivotal to establishing communist connections was Hiss' relationship with Soviet spy Whittaker Chambers; an association that Hiss adamantly denied. Unfortunately for Hiss, who was an avid bird watcher, he couldn't contain his excitement over warblers and once raved to Chambers about seeing a prothonotary warbler. This exchange established a connection between the two men, and Hiss ultimately was convicted of perjury and served 44 months.

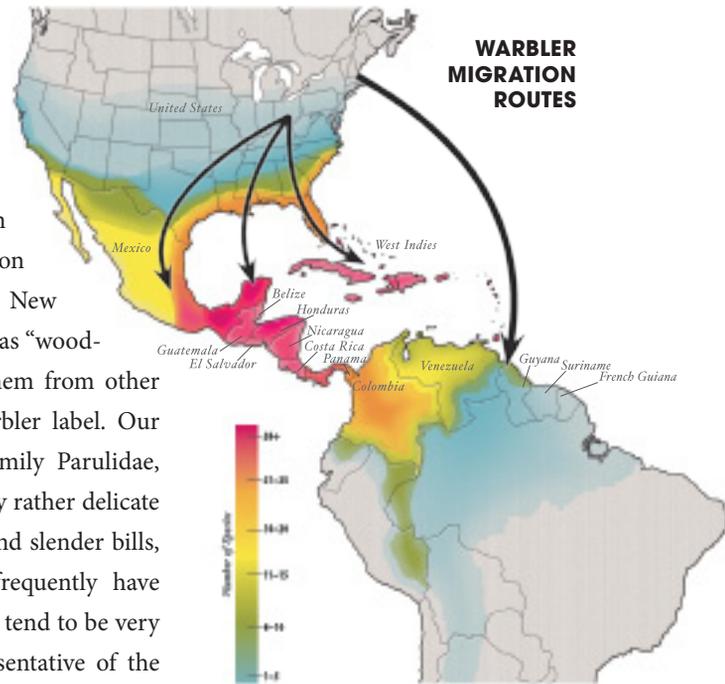
Alger Hiss wasn't unique in developing a case of warbleritis. Every spring, thousands of birders get warbler fever and birding listservs are clogged with rosters of warblers seen on field trips. At least in eastern North America, warblers are the undisputed people's choice champions of the songbird world.

The term "warbler" has been around a long time. Way back in 1773, Welsh naturalist Thomas Pennant dubbed the little European songbirds in the genus *Sylvia*, "warblers" in reference to their trilling songs. Early naturalists imported the word to North America and applied it to birds that reminded them of their

familiar Old World warblers. Although tethered by a shared name, the warblers that we fawn over every spring are quite different than songbirds found in Europe, or anywhere else on the globe. Sometimes the New World birds are referred to as "wood-warblers" to distinguish them from other species that share the warbler label. Our warblers belong to the family Parulidae, and its members are usually rather delicate and small, with thin legs and slender bills, often colorful plumage, frequently have wing bars or tail spots, and tend to be very active. Our smallest representative of the tribe is the elfin Northern parula, which tapes out at 4 ½ inches and weighs but seven grams – the same as three pennies. The giant of the family is the yellow-breasted chat. At 7½ inches and 25 grams, it dwarfs the dainty parula.

Warblers are exclusively birds of the Americas. There are nearly 120 species, and they occur in the Caribbean, South America, Central America, Mexico, and of course North America. The greatest number of species is found, at least seasonally, in northern Central America. This region is probably where warblers began their incredible evolutionary radiation. The ebb and flow of plant communities as a result of glacial periods likely stimulated migratory behavior in warblers, leading to the incredible mass movements in spring and fall that we witness every year.

Insects are key in influencing warbler behavior. Nearly all species are highly insectivorous for much of the year, and that dietary regime dictates their migrations.



Habitats at northern latitudes produce a staggering bonanza of insects, but only seasonally. Thus, most warblers breeding in North America retreat to the tropics for the winter, invading the U.S. and Canada to capitalize on the seasonal bounty of food. Their numbers are staggering. One billion or more warblers breed in the vast boreal forest that blankets the northern U.S. and Canada. Millions of others occupy more southerly habitats, such as in Ohio.

The greatest warbler spectacle on earth takes place in eastern North America, and Ohio is in the center ring. Every spring, waves of warblers tumble into our state to establish nesting territories in forests, wetlands, and scrublands. Many more birds pass through on their way to points north, using Ohio habitats as vital waystations on journeys that might encompass thousands of miles. First to return are territory-seeking males and the testosterone-engorged songsters waste no time staking claim to their

a great day, to find 35 species and many of them can be seen in large numbers. The Mecca for warbler-seekers is the fabled “bird trail” at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area on the shore of Lake Erie. The second Saturday in May is designated as International Migratory Bird Day, and as many as 5,000 birders might descend on the bird trail creating an amazing spectacle of birders and birds. It isn’t hard to spot the new birders. Binoculars in hand, they gape slack-jawed at a treasure trove of colorful warblers, often at fingertip range. For their part, the warblers tend to ignore the people and sometimes nearly alight on startled birders.

It isn’t hard to grasp the allure of warblers. This group of songbirds collectively presents a palette of color without peer. Flashy American redstarts sport the colors of Halloween, their coal-black plumage accented by brilliant orange flashes in the wings and tail. Magnolia warblers appear almost garish, their lemon-yellow underparts boldly striped in black. Toss in a bright white wing panel and tail band, black mask, and white eyebrow, and its small wonder the “maggie” is sometimes called the field mark bird. Male

bay-breasted warblers look otherworldly and unmistakable, painted prominently in chestnut. And so it goes. Every warbler has an attraction all its own, and with these Lilliputian songbirds around, there is never a dull moment.

There is also an element of mystery to the warblers, and this intrigue contributes greatly to their charisma. Getting to know them requires some diligence. Of the twenty-five species that breed in Ohio, a number are rare and must be sought out. Many lurk high in trees or dense growth, and do not readily present themselves to the observer. Finally, most warblers are but short-term visitors to our latitude, spending as little as three months here before departing for tropical climes and habitats vastly different than Ohio woodlands. Some of our warblers’ wintertime haunts include exotic places such as San Pedro Volcano and the temples of Tikal in Guatemala; Monteverde Cloud Forest in Costa Rica; and the island of Aruba in the Caribbean. Collectively, the warbler species that breed in Ohio or pass through in migration fan out to nearly every country to the south of the U.S.



BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER



AMERICAN REDSTART



BAY-BREASTED WARBLER



Warblers bring scores of birders great joy each year, but that's not all they do. As insect gourmets, warblers consume untold billions of insects, especially caterpillars. Were there not warblers pillaging our trees, caterpillars and other insect populations would skyrocket and forest ecosystems would be wrenched out of balance. They are also a major component of birding ecotourism. Every spring, thousands of birders from nearly every state and many other countries descend upon Ohio's western Lake Erie marsh region. Warblers are the number one attraction. Whether rank amateur or seasoned veteran, all of the binocular-toters fall under the warbler spell. Not only that, but these enthusiasts spend their money in Ohio. During just the months of April and May, birders probably spend upwards of \$20 million in the counties that buffer the western end of Lake Erie. That's just the tip of the economic iceberg. Nationwide, birders spend the equivalent of a small Fort Knox in their pursuit of warblers and other birds.

Thirty-eight species of warblers breed in eastern North America, but there used to be thirty-nine. The Bachman's warbler, discovered by Lutheran minister John Bachman in 1832 in South Carolina, is a black-bibbed lemony-yellow denizen of thickly overgrown swamps in the southeastern U.S. Or was. Never common, the Bachman's warbler, which wintered in Cuba, has long been a Holy Grail for birders and ornithologists. Despite intensive searching, the last confirmed sightings of Bachman's warbler date to 1962, and most authorities consider it extinct. It's likely that large-scale habitat changes in both its breeding and wintering grounds caused this gorgeous warbler to twinkle out of existence.

No one wants any of the other warblers to go the way of the Bachman's warbler. As Roger Tory Peterson stated,

“Birds are indicators of the environment. If they are in trouble, we know we'll soon be in trouble.”

WARBLER HOTSPOTS

MAGEE MARSH WILDLIFE AREA

More birders visit the 2,200 acre Magee Marsh Wildlife Area than any other single site in Ohio. Magee is legendary well beyond our state's borders, and it is one of the premier birding locales in the eastern U.S. Every regularly occurring warbler in the Great Lakes region can be found. Magee is probably the best place to find the federally endangered Kirtland's warbler away from its breeding or wintering grounds.

SHAWNEE STATE FOREST

Shawnee is Ohio's largest contiguous forest at nearly 64,000 acres. There are breeding warblers galore: 18 species breed, and some of the forest-dependent species occur in great densities. Migration can also be fabulous as mixed flocks of warblers move along upland razorback ridges.

MOHICAN-MEMORIAL STATE FOREST

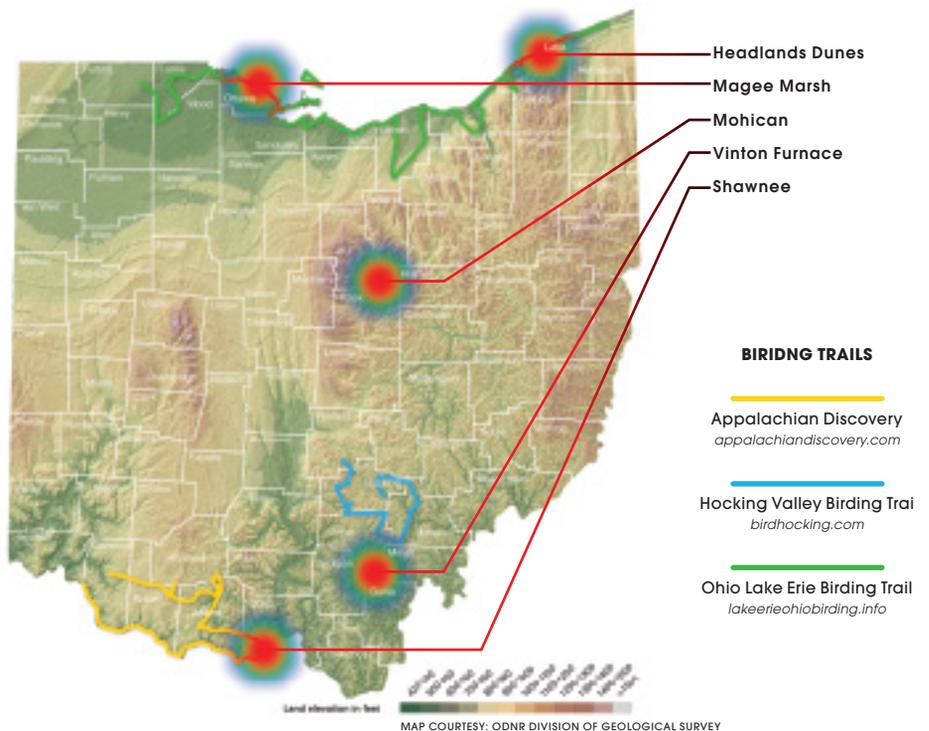
The 5,000 acre Mohican State Forest features a diversity of woodland habitats and is an outstanding site to seek breeding warblers. Many rare nesters occur here, such as Blackburnian, Canada, and magnolia warblers. A 1997 study documented 25 species of breeding warblers, a remarkable tally for any Ohio locale.

VINTON FURNACE STATE FOREST

At nearly 16,000 acres, Vinton Furnace is one of the largest contiguous blocks of forest in the state. It is dominated by older-growth upland oak-hickory associations and supports a thriving population of cerulean warblers. At least 16 other warbler species breed, including large numbers of hooded, Kentucky, and worm-eating warblers.

HEADLANDS DUNES STATE NATURE PRESERVE

This site may be the birdiest 25 acres in Ohio. Located on the Lake Erie shoreline at the mouth of the Grand River, Headlands attracts blizzards of birds in migration. An astonishing 38 warbler species have been found, and most of those can occur in large numbers.



Smartphones: those magical little devices that have somehow taken over so many lives. These cell phones turned mini computers have become the essence of how we communicate, get information, and routinely entertain ourselves. If you have a smartphone, you might find yourself addicted, spending hours scrolling through and downloading the latest and greatest applications, otherwise known as “apps.” Those without smartphones might criticize you for being hypnotized by the tiny glowing screen. If your iPhone or Android isn’t clutched in your hand at this moment (acting much like an extension of your arm), it’s probably within eyesight... and it’s probably beckoning to you to pick it up and play a level of “Angry Birds.”

Okay, maybe a few levels.

Despite what some may think, the world of smartphone apps offers more than just games of virtually slinging wingless birds through the air, and they are not all just a waste of time. The quotable cliché “there’s an app for that!” really does hold some truth. More and more people are discovering the usefulness of numerous apps in outdoor adventures. There is especially a growing trend in bird watchers taking advantage of their portable information lifelines outside; the difference is they’re using them to enjoy real, live birds that can fly on their own.

Whether you’re an amateur or avid bird watcher, you can easily lighten the weight of your load by packing your smartphone with the proper outdoorsy apps. There are apps for planning trips, outdoor safety, wildlife identification, keeping a bird sighting list, and much more. The only problem is that there are so many to choose from; ranging from free to fairly expensive. But, no matter what you decide to download, you really can collect enough apps to equip you for an entire day of bird and wildlife watching! So let’s start packing.

a day of birding?

THERE’S AN APP FOR THAT!

by Heather Clagett

eNewsletter Coordinator, Ohio Division of Wildlife



PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR A DAY OUTDOORS

First things first: know where you are going. Efficient navigation to and around parks, wildlife areas, and other can't-miss bird hangouts is vital to a successful birding trip, but folding and unfolding numerous maps can be a pain. Make it easy by downloading compass and map apps - important resources that no outdoor enthusiast should be without. The Google Maps app is popular, free, and acts much like a Global Positioning System (GPS), allowing you to zoom in on your current location and get directions. Take it a step further by finding an app that specializes in parks maps and trail guides. There are even some out there that feature Ohio parks and trails.

Besides using apps to plan routes and keep from getting lost, you should also stock up on news and safety-related apps to be fully prepared for hiking outdoors. Know when the birds are most likely flying and when it's time to head back indoors. Numerous weather apps are available, with some offering more detailed information than others (i.e., wind speeds, precipitation levels, etc.). A first aid app is another handy one to have for reminder of proper protocol in certain emergency situations. Of course, don't forget that your phone is, well, a phone. Its ability to make calls and text is also valuable for safety purposes.

IDENTIFYING BIRDS AND RECORDING ENCOUNTERS

Now that you're geared up to go outside, it's time to gather up your birding resources. Leave your stack of field guides at home, and start searching for the birding app that's just right for you. This may take a little more time shopping around the app "store," so be sure to know what you want and check out everything each app has to offer before making a decision. Many field guide apps have versions that are free, but the ones you pay for usually provide more interaction. Big names like Peterson's Field Guides, Audubon Society, and Cornell University have exceptional apps that provide field guides complete with photos, life histories, bird songs, range maps, and the ability to keep a list of sightings. In some apps, you can even post and share sightings and locations with other birders. If detailed notes or journaling is your thing, download a simple (and free) notepad app so you can properly record your memorable

experience on the spot. Not into writing? A sketchpad app might be more your style.

Photos, video, and audio are priceless souvenirs to bring home from a birding trip, but don't feel like you need to lug around high tech equipment. Smartphones usually come with a basic camera built in for photos and video, but that's not the only camera available to you. Browse the app store for camera software that can do more! Find something with a higher quality zoom and better setting options for taking photos outdoors.

Photo editing apps are also available for zealous outdoor photographers. In addition to what you see, you might also want to record what you hear. To capture bird songs and other wildlife sounds, download an audio recorder. These little apps are usually free and very simple to use.

GETTING DISTRACTED AND DISCOVERING NATURE

Of course, not all birders venture out just to look at birds. There is so much to see and learn every time we step foot outdoors that our eyes and minds may wander. What kind of caterpillar is that? Was that a red squirrel that just ran across the trail? Is that a sugar maple tree... or a red maple? Take a minute to empower yourself with other tools like field guide apps for plants, mammals, fish, insects, butterflies, spiders, and animal tracks and scat. You can virtually (pun intended) look up information on everything you see.

With so much to explore and so many birds to chase, you're bound to lose track of time, but don't worry. When night falls, just click on your favorite flashlight app for the trek back to the car. An infrared camera app will allow you to snap a picture of a few bats or owls on the way. If the night is clear and calm, take a time out to thumb through the night sky's constellations with a sky map app. The possibilities are endless.

EMBRACING APPS AND LIGHTENING THE LOAD

So the next time someone tries to give you grief for "playing" on your smartphone while birding or wildlife watching, show them how your apps are actually enhancing your understanding of nature, at home and in the field! If they still prefer birding the old-fashioned way, there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. Everyone enjoys birding in their own way... but there is something to be said for not having to carry so much stuff.



OHIO TEENS

ARE BREAKING

DOWN BARRIERS

by Tim Daniel
Photographer, Ohio Division of Wildlife



Despite being America's most environmentally aware segment, many young people have few real connections to the outdoors. They are taught to hug a tree, but not how to climb one – to save the rainforests, but not how to conserve what's right in their backyard. There is an organization in Ohio that is meeting this problem head on and they are the Ohio Young Birders Club (OYBC).

The club was formed in 2006 and at the time was the only one of its kind. Since then there have been 17 states that have established a young birders club of their own. The Ohio club is organized by current director, Ken Keffer, but it began with the vision and hard work of Kim Kaufman of the

Black Swamp Bird Observatory located in northern Ohio. Kim's vision was to engage teens by offering quality field trips led by experts in their areas. "These kids are so amazing," Kim said. "They teach us something every time we go out in the field." That sentiment seems to be a common thread that all of the adult advisors share. These advisors volunteer their time to help OYBC with transportation, planning, funding, bookkeeping, promotion, and various other tasks that are crucial for running a grass roots organization.

Let's look at how the Ohio Young Birders Club has broken down some of the barriers between young people and the outdoors. One specific barrier is the concept that the

indoors is more fun than the outdoors. Play stations, cartoon networks, and the Internet compete for a young person's time. The advisors of OYBC have determined that students are more likely to think something is fun (and participate) if it is their idea, so the adults allow the young birders to come up with their own ideas for field trips and topics for the annual meeting.

Another barrier keeping young people indoors is the lack of peer support; activities are much more enjoyable if the experience is shared with other youth that are of similar age. OYBC currently has 330 members around the state and many of the teens gather together on field trips and service projects that are held once a month. This camaraderie is contagious and it makes all of the events enjoyable for participants.





Two of the biggest barriers are the concept of the outdoors being unsafe and the lack of time teens have to recreate freely. Families and teens are overbooked and always juggling their spare time. OYBC gives the teens the flexibility to decide the schedule of their events. This creates better attendance and the advisors can car-pool the members to the activity location, relieving pressure from busy parents. The club also offers a safe, supervised environment, educating members on all aspects of the outdoors, creating more awareness and limiting fear.

Teen members have planned field trips to The Wilds, South Bass Island, Lake Erie for winter gull watching, and various local

bird-friendly areas. They have even taken out-of-state trips to see migrating birds. New adventures are always being planned by the OYBC youth advisory board. The advisory board meets four times a year to offer their advice on the type of outings that would be most interesting to members their own age.

It is human nature for us older kids to worry, shake our heads, and lament over the reluctance of young people to go outside and play. The best way to solve this concern is to make exploring the outdoors a priority to eager young minds. A little outdoor exploration at any age can lead to an amazing experience that will last a lifetime.

To enroll a teen in the Ohio Young Birders Club you can visit their website at ohioyoungbirders.org or call (419) 898-4070.

OYBC is a dynamic, student-led club where teens ages 12 to 18 can celebrate their love of the outdoors! Its unique mission is to: Promote volunteering and contributing through nature-related service projects; foster interest in nature and conservation; encourage young people to spend more time outside; introduce young people to career opportunities in the wildlife and conservation fields; connect young birders with adult mentors willing to share their time, knowledge, and transportation; and help young birders have fun while birding!





WATCHABLE WILDLIFE

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER

by Jim McCormac

Avian Education Specialist, Ohio Division of Wildlife



Firmly established on the warbler A-list is the stunning prothonotary warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*). An alternate name tips one to what is in store: golden swamp warbler. Even amongst the warblers, many of whom sport outrageously colorful plumage, the prothonotary is a standout. Males are bedecked with feathers the color of molten gold, offset by slaty-blue wings. Big, curiously bright black eyes punctuate the face – proportionately large eyes are an adaptation for better visibility in dimly lit forested haunts.

A first encounter with a prothonotary warbler should prove to be a memorable experience. One often hears a singing male first; its loud husky *zwee-zwee-zwee* song carries a considerable distance. Stalk the songster patiently, and eventually you'll be rewarded with a sunburst explosion of lemon-yellow as the warbler pops from the gloom of the swamp. Prothonotary warblers are often inquisitive and display little fear of people, which allows for close viewing.

Several factors conspire to make the prothonotary warbler an uncommon Ohio spe-

cial. They are habitat specialists, dependent upon large tracts of wet woods with plenty of dead snags. Swaths of mature streamside forest are also used. As Ohio has lost over 90 percent of its pre-settlement wetlands – and swamp forests have been especially hard hit – the warblers have far fewer places to breed than they once did. Dead and dying timber is an integral requirement, as punky wood often sports cavities that these birds require for nesting.

As the only cavity-nesting warbler in eastern North America, the prothonotary warbler faces a real bottleneck when it comes to nest sites. Competition for cavities is ferocious. Tree swallows, chickadees, titmice, and others sometimes vie for the same hole. Non-native European starlings can usurp suitable prothonotary warbler holes in open swamplands. But just as with our most popular cavity-nesting bird, the Eastern bluebird, people can help. Suitable nest boxes placed in appropriate habitat can greatly bolster prothonotary warbler populations, such as at Hoover Reservoir (see “Ohio Hotspots” on facing page).

The future for Ohio's nesting prothonotary warblers appears to be improving. Ohio's first breeding bird atlas, which surveyed nesting birds statewide, was conducted between 1982 and 1987. That study documented prothonotary warblers in 49 counties, but the overall numbers were low and the warbler was generally rare and local. Our second breeding bird atlas collected data from 2006 to 2011, and generated about four times the number of reports as the first atlas. Why the upswing? There are now more birders in the field, reporting their results, but that's not the sole factor leading to more prothonotary records. Suitable habitat has probably increased, due to increased protection of wetlands and river corridors. Lastly, the number of nest boxes placed specifically for prothonotary warblers has increased greatly, and these “nest trails” have led to localized booms in warbler populations.

OHIO HOTSPOTS

HOOVER RESERVOIR | This 3,300-acre lake is just north of Columbus, and the woods that buffer the reservoir's northern tip harbor the largest prothonotary warbler population in Ohio.

KILLBUCK MARSH WILDLIFE AREA | Much of this 5,700-acre wildlife area in Wayne County is dominated by wetlands, including swamp forest. Prothonotary warblers can easily be found throughout much of the area.

MAGEE MARSH WILDLIFE AREA | The legendary “bird trail” at this 2,000-acre wildlife area on the shores of Lake Erie in Lucas and Ottawa counties often produces prothonotary warblers, especially in spring.

Additional information can be found at ohiobirds.org and wildohio.com.

AT A GLANCE

SIZE

Length: 5 ½ inches

Weight: 16 grams

OCCURRENCE

Mid-April to Mid-September

HABITAT

Permanently wet woods
and seasonally flooded
floodplain forests

CLUTCH SIZE

4 to 6 eggs

YOUNG FLEDGE

2-weeks after hatching

TYPICAL FOODS

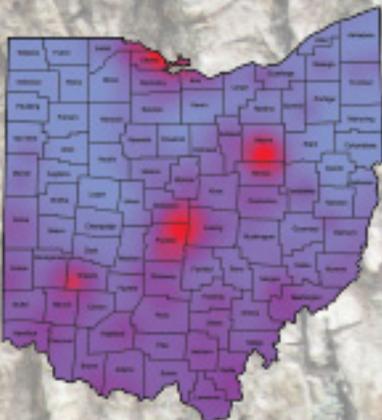
Almost completely insectivorous,
with caterpillars forming the
bulk of their diet

ETYMOLOGY

(*Pro-thon-oh-tare-ee*)

After “prothonotaries,” papal clerks
in the Catholic Church who
wore brilliant yellow robes.

OHIO HOTSPOTS



Some warblers have Westerville resident
Charlie Bombaci to thank. Charlie has
placed about 250 nest boxes in the area.





PROTHONOTARY WARBLER

“GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY”

- 2012 -

ARTWORK by CHAD CROUCH

The sunburst yellow of a prothonotary warbler flitting through the serrated leaves of a cottonwood tree bears semblance to a shimmering vein of gold dancing through a mountain of quartz. While nothing can replicate the shock of gold standing out from a sea of greens, this rendition of a spring male can trigger the memory of a sighting. Bright enough to look out of place in the natural world, this splash of painted sunlight fits right in to the pages of the birding edition of Wild Ohio.

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY CONFERENCE

The Wildlife Diversity Conference is a great opportunity to learn more about Ohio's fish and wildlife, meet other wildlife enthusiasts, and view original artwork! The original painting of the Golden Opportunity, as well as the original artwork for the Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp will be on display at this year's conference held March 7 at the Aladdin Shrine Complex in Columbus. The diversity conference will feature “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly” of Ohio's wildlife, with presentations ranging from birds using Lake Erie to terrestrial crayfish. Pre-registration for the conference will open at the end of January. For information, visit the events calendar at wildohio.com.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

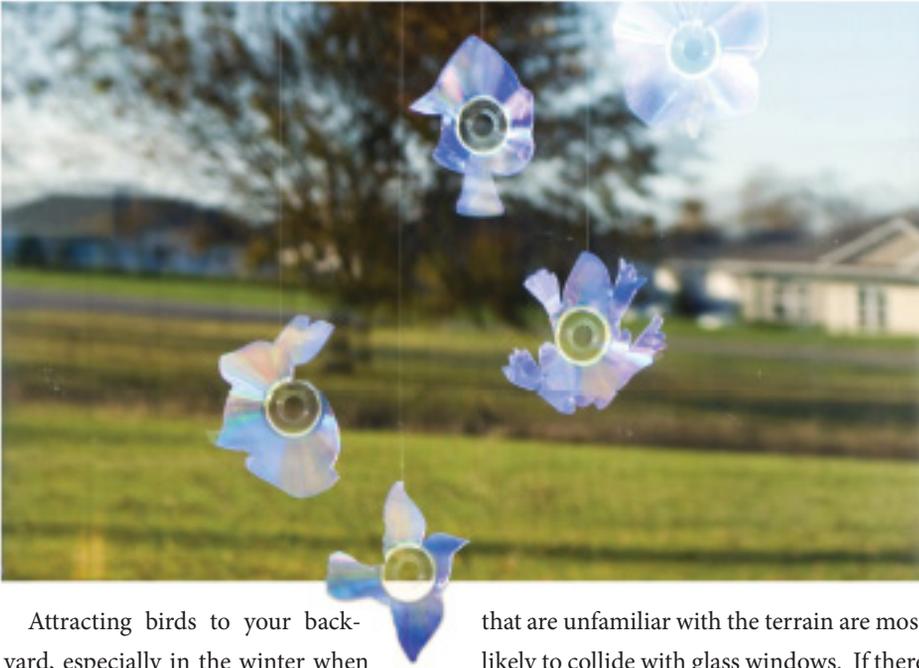
A Jefferson County native and graduate of the Columbus College of Art & Design, Chad proudly serves Ohioans as a graphic designer with the Division of Wildlife.

To request additional information about becoming a *Wild Ohio* Artist, email us at wildohiomagazine@dnr.state.oh.us



BACKYARDS FOR WILDLIFE

ATTRACTING BIRDS TO YOUR FEEDERS, NOT YOUR HOME



Attracting birds to your backyard, especially in the winter when colorful visitors brighten the drab scenery, can be delightful. Birds flying into and flitting around feeders is a great sight to see, but the spell of avian antics can easily be broken by the thud of a bird crashing into your window. This disturbing and sometimes shocking disruption happens most frequently in the spring and fall, and can be minimized with one or several preventative measures.

Bird “crashes” occur wherever people and wildlife share a living space, and can happen for several reasons. Migrating birds

that are unfamiliar with the terrain are most likely to collide with glass windows. If there are shrubs or trees near your home close to a window, the glass can reflect the vegetation making the area appear to be a much larger landing area. If windows on opposite sides of your house align or two windows meet each other in a corner, birds may perceive an opening and attempt to fly through the area. Birds can also see reflections of themselves in a glass window, causing them to become aggressive with an “intruder.” This happens most often with males during their mating season, and will usually pass when males stop vying for the attention of a mate.



AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

There are some simple steps to take to prevent bird strikes. Bird alert decals are window clings designed to give birds a visual cue that the window is there. Decals that are small and placed in the corner don't do much to break-up reflections. For the most success, place a large decal or decals toward the center of the window.

Hanging Mylar tape, ribbon, wind chimes or any other lightweight, eye-catching material in front of windows will deter birds from a window, especially if the material is able to move in the wind.

Netting, found in hardware stores or greenhouses, can be placed in front of windows to break up reflections. If stretched taut enough, netting can act as a barrier to lessen the impact should a bird still fly toward the glass. Netting should be fine enough mesh to block a bird from flying through, but does not have to be such a dense mesh that it obstructs your view of the outdoors.

If collisions occur close to a bird feeding station, consider relocating your feeders to a new location further from the house.

MAKE YOUR OWN BIRD CHIMES

You will need:

- Strong scissors or snips, String,
- Marker, and Discs (CD's or DVD's)

Using CD's or DVD's, draw bird shapes or designs onto the face of the disc. Cut the designs out of the disc, punch a hole in the top, and hang from a string. Hang the discs in front of windows (at varying heights if possible) where bird collisions have occurred or are likely. The discs are lightweight enough to move in the wind and will slow a bird's flight towards the glass.



HABITAT CONNECTION

LICHENS & HUMMINGBIRDS



RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS
SUSAN HELTERBRAN

The pages of Habitat Connection looks at the relationships between plants and animals (flora and fauna) found in Ohio.

Lichen (pronounced, “like-in,” as in, “that fungus has really taken a likin’ to that algae”), are a complex life form made up of a symbiotic relationship between a fungus and a green or blue-green algae. While some lichens can appear leafy, have structures that look like stems, or look like a simple plant, they are not a part of the plant kingdom. They are instead a relationship of two organisms that have their own scientific classifications.

Often mistaken for a moss (a perfect example is Spanish moss – which is actually a lichen), lichen and moss are very different. Mosses are primitive plants, with structures that are similar to higher functioning plants

such as ferns and flowering plants. Lichens do not have plant attributes, except chloroplasts, which are found in only the part of the organism that is algae. Lichens usually have a stronger resemblance to their fungal component, and can cover rocks and trees with a sometimes crust-like appearance. Lichens prefer more open, dry habitats than the shaded habitats preferred by mosses. Lichen may not share habitat preferences with mosses, but they do share substrates such as bark, rocks, soils, and dead wood.

Lichens are an important organism to humans and animals alike. The list of ways that humans benefit from these organisms includes dyes, antibiotic properties, and their absorptive properties. Lichens are also an important pollution indicator, absorbing what is in the atmosphere. Heavy metals, including carbon, sulfur, and other pollutants are absorbed by lichens. Scientists study lichens, monitoring levels of toxins to determine levels of contaminants in the air.

Animals depend on lichen as well. Deer, insects, and birds use lichen for forage, shelter, and nest building material. Tree frogs use lichen covered surfaces to hide, their coloration matching the organism like perfect camouflage. Lichen has been found in the nesting material of flying squirrels and more than 50 species of birds. The Northern parula warbler uses it almost exclusively to line its nest cavity. Every summer in Ohio, ruby-throated hummingbirds seek lichens as nest building material.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

Each year, the female ruby-throats are seen hovering in the corners or roof overhangs of buildings and homes. If she’s not dining on arachnids, she is likely collecting spider webs, one of the main components of her nest. Hummingbirds build their nests in hardwoods or evergreens. Their nest site is usually situated in the crotch of an outer, down-turned branch. The inner hummingbird nest is lined with plant down, and the tiny birds use the sticky, stretchy spider web to weave lichens together to form the outer edges of their nest. The lichens certainly lend their camouflaging properties to help hide the nest, as the best way to find a hummingbird nest is to follow the female back to it.



RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD
ART SELLING



Binocular Basics

by Lindsay Deering
Website Coordinator, Ohio Division of Wildlife

Bins, glasses, binos or eyes – no matter what you call them, a reliable pair of binoculars is one of the most basic tools that a wildlife-watcher needs in the field. But, the pair that works for the football stadium is not going to cut it on the trail.



PICKING THE RIGHT PAIR

The first thing to consider when picking out binoculars is your budget. Beginners may get frustrated with an inexpensive pair, less than \$100. So, when planning, think about budgeting closer to \$200 for a start-up pair, knowing that you might soon want an upgrade. A top-of-the-line pair of bins could run several thousand dollars. Once you know how much you can spend, you can begin your search for the perfect pair.

Next, decide where you'll be using your binoculars most often. Are you solely seeking birds, or do you enjoy getting close looks at dragonflies and butterflies, too? Do you do your wildlife-watching in the woods or in open fields? If you are primarily birdwatching in forests or heavy cover, you'll want to pick a pair of binoculars with a broad field of view so you can more easily track hopping birds. For insect-watching and viewing things closer to you, a smaller magnification may better suit you as you can focus these faster. In the open fields or for hawk or waterfowl watching, larger magnification and a smaller field of view will be most successful.

Finally, identify any special conditions for which you need to account. If you wear eyeglasses, you need to adjust for the extra distance that the glasses push the binoculars from your eyes. Look for binoculars with adjustable eyecups. Some pairs allow you to pull the cups all the way out for use without glasses and push them in when wearing your glasses. Try out several pairs while wearing your glasses to find the right fit. Also, think about your hand size and strength. If you are slight, you do not want to lug around a heavy pair of binos. Make sure your binoculars fit your body and your hands.

UNDERSTANDING THE NUMBERS

Binoculars are identified with two numbers, for example 10x50. The first number, 10X, is the magnification. Birds will look 10 times larger through the binoculars than they actually are. Magnification between 7X and 10X is appropriate for wildlife-watching. Lower magnifications, like 7X and 8X, offer a wider field of view, but higher numbers, like 10X, provide larger images. The second number, 50, is the size of the objective lens, which is the front lens, in millimeters. Larger lenses let in more light and offer a brighter image. Optimally the lens should be close to five times the magnification, i.e., 7x35, 8x40, or 10x50, to provide a balance between a large and a bright image.

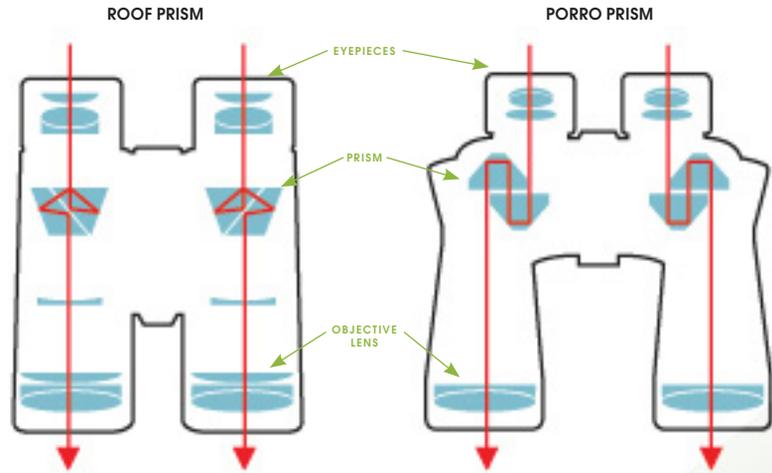


magnification
HIGHER=BIGGER IMAGE

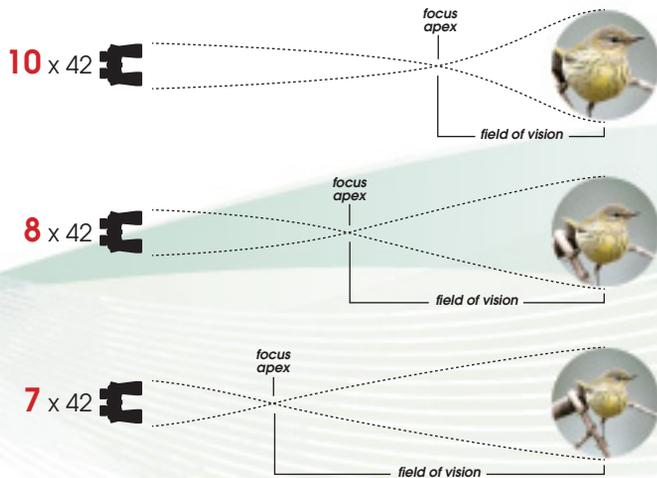
size of front lens
BIGGER=BRIGHTER IMAGE

PRISM TYPES

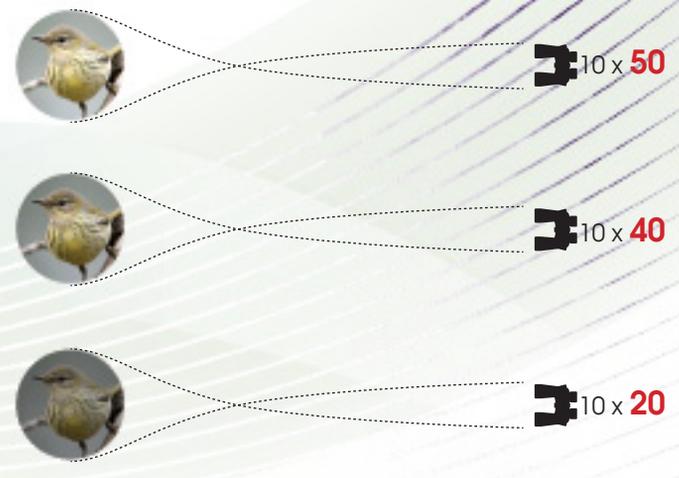
There are two main types of binocular construction – porro prism and roof prism. Porro prism binoculars are those whose objective lenses are set out from the body. While these are a bit less expensive and offer a great three-dimensional image, people find them hard to carry. Roof prism binoculars have objective lenses that are lined up with the eyecups offering a more slim body with an easier grip and a highly durable product. However, this more difficult design leads to a more expensive pair of bins.



MAGNIFICATION COMPARISON



OBJECTIVE LENS COMPARISON



CORRECTLY USING YOUR OPTICS

Once you've found a pair of binoculars that makes you look like a pro, you have to learn how to use them correctly. Practice focusing your binoculars on stationary objects. Most binoculars have a large wheel in the center for focusing. Roll the wheel until an object is in focus for your left eye. Then, if your binoculars have a separate right-eye adjustment, spin that until the image you see with your right eye is the same as that you see with your left. Once your right eye is matched to your left, you should not need to adjust it again. Simply use the center wheel to focus on the birds.

Because our eyes have a much greater field of view than binoculars, you will see birds with your eyes and might have trouble locating them once you lift your bins. To remedy this problem, **never take your eyes off of the bird.** Lift your binoculars to your eyes. Do not look down at your binoculars. Yes, you might hit yourself in the face a few times before you get the hang of it, but that bird will be directly in the line of your binoculars once they are lifted.

As with any sport or hobby, practice is essential. Now that you have the tools and the know-how, get out to your favorite spot and start finding birds, butterflies, even leaves at the tops of trees, anything that will let you use your binoculars and continue to improve your wildlife-watching skills.





Sauger Fishing

IN THE OHIO RIVER TAILWATERS

by Michael Greenlee
Southeastern Ohio Fish Management Supervisor
Ohio Division of Wildlife

Sauger are considered one of the most popular sportfish in the Ohio River and represent a large portion of the fish caught by anglers at lock and dam “tailwaters.” Sauger are to Ohio River anglers what walleye are to Lake Erie anglers. A cousin to the walleye, sauger are smaller, but make up in numbers what they lack in size. The most

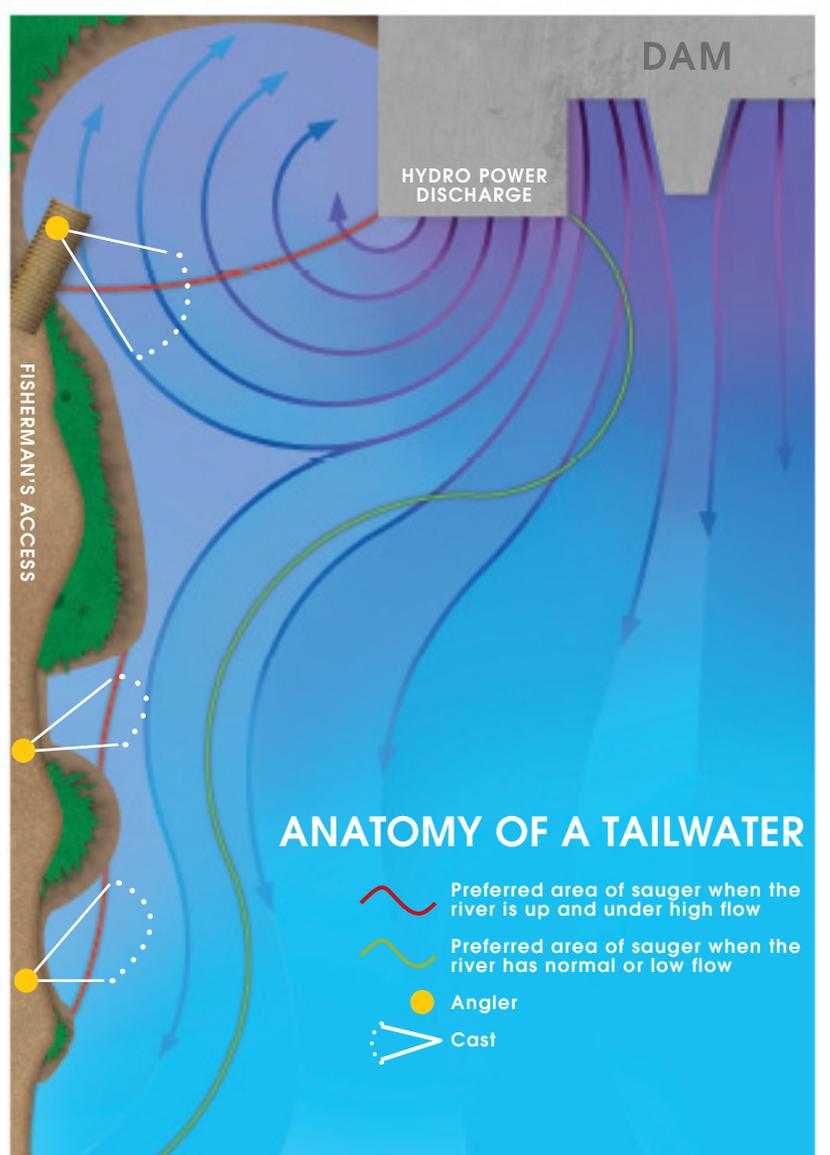
common catches measure up to 16 inches with an occasional trophy measuring 20 inches and weighing three pounds.

For a first time sauger angler, fishing a tailwater could seem daunting. Although most tailwaters offer easy access for shore anglers, strong current and fluctuating river stages, or water levels, can present a new and

unfamiliar challenge to anglers more familiar with inland lakes. Experienced anglers have learned to rely on a few basic pieces of information to improve their chances at a successful trip. Here are a few things to consider that can improve your chances of landing sauger at one of the nine tailwaters along the Ohio River.

TACKLE AND TECHNIQUE | Try a medium weight, six-to-seven foot graphite rod with a sensitive tip. Add to that an open-faced spinning reel equipped with eight-to-12-pound test, “abrasion-resistant” line, and you are set to handle the fishing conditions of most tailwaters. Since sauger love to hold tight to the river bottom, it’s important that bait presentations are close to the bottom, too. The preferred bait for most sauger anglers is a 1/4-to 3/8-ounce lead head jig, dressed with a two-to three-inch curly-tailed jig. White, chartreuse, bubble-gum, and orange are preferred jig colors with black, green, and salt and pepper also effective in clear water conditions. Finicky sauger can also be enticed to bite by “tipping” the jig with a minnow or a small strip of cut bait.

A common casting technique in a strong current is to make casts against the current anywhere from a 45-degree angle to nearly parallel to the shore. If current is not as strong, cast at a 90-degree angle. Allow the bait to fall to the bottom and bounce the jig just off the bottom using a slow retrieve. Make casts to shallower water at dawn, dusk, and after dark. Daytime angling, especially in clear water, should be in deeper water. Sauger will move in shallow water during the day in muddy conditions; however, the best fishing near shore is at night, just before sunset and in the morning just after sunrise.



GO WITH THE FLOW | Often overlooked, but key to a successful sauger trip to a tailwater is reading current river conditions. Do some homework before taking a trip to the river. Many people drive long distances only to find out once they have arrived that the river is “blown out” and unfishable due to recent rains occurring somewhere else in the drainage. If you have access to the Internet there is an excellent website that will help you determine river conditions such as flow, river stage, and water temperature. Visit rivergages.com, and select the Pittsburgh, Huntington or Louisville district, depending on the portion of the Ohio River you are fishing.

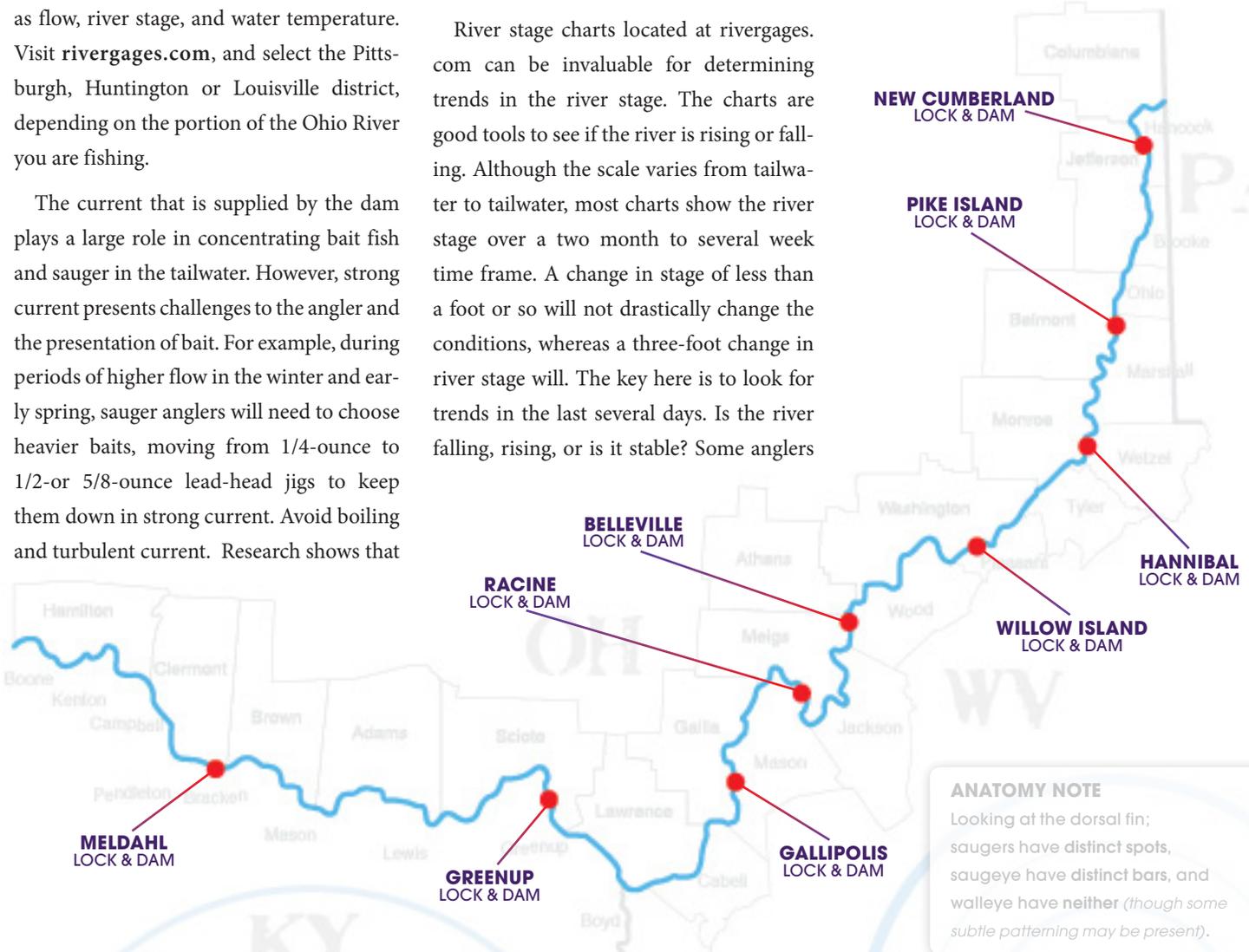
The current that is supplied by the dam plays a large role in concentrating bait fish and sauger in the tailwater. However, strong current presents challenges to the angler and the presentation of bait. For example, during periods of higher flow in the winter and early spring, sauger anglers will need to choose heavier baits, moving from 1/4-ounce to 1/2-or 5/8-ounce lead-head jigs to keep them down in strong current. Avoid boiling and turbulent current. Research shows that

most fish will avoid these areas. Instead, look for current breaks along the shore and target the bottom of those areas. Sauger often hold in current breaks, which are areas of the river where the current is interrupted due to large rocks, indentations, and other irregularities. For most tailwaters, higher flow and current will make it very difficult to fish immediately below the dam. Look for breaks and refuge areas several hundred yards downstream from the dam.

River stage charts located at rivergages.com can be invaluable for determining trends in the river stage. The charts are good tools to see if the river is rising or falling. Although the scale varies from tailwater to tailwater, most charts show the river stage over a two month to several week time frame. A change in stage of less than a foot or so will not drastically change the conditions, whereas a three-foot change in river stage will. The key here is to look for trends in the last several days. Is the river falling, rising, or is it stable? Some anglers

say sauger fishing is best when the river is on the rise while others say it is good both on the rise and fall...keep track and decide for yourself.

Ohio River tailwaters offer excellent fishing opportunities for sauger. The combination of excellent habitat and great fishing access make these areas a favorite for sauger anglers year-round. If you have never fished one, do your homework and give it a try!



ANATOMY NOTE
Looking at the dorsal fin; saugers have distinct spots, saugeye have distinct bars, and walleye have *neither* (though some subtle patterning may be present).

SAUGER FISHING OPPORTUNITIES ON THE OHIO RIVER

MONTHS (SEASON)	OPPORTUNITY
March - April (Spring)	Excellent (peak)
May (Early Summer)	Good
June - mid-September (Summer)	Fair
Mid-September - February (Fall-Winter)	Excellent



SOUNDS OFFAL

EMBRACING OFTEN-OVERLOOKED DEER PARTS

by Scott Denamen
State Wildlife Officer, Ohio Division of Wildlife

I made venison haggis once. I don't know many people that have, or that would want to. For some reason I felt the need to attempt it. Like many people, I try to make the most of what I have. What I did have were two shelves full of cookbooks and occasional bouts of insomnia. Around 2:00 a.m. one night I stumbled onto a recipe for stuffed sheep's stomach. Not what I had been looking for...but intriguing. A couple of weeks later I shot a fat doe and gathered up my ingredients. Stomach, heart, and liver. I had the balance of the ingredients at home. The results, sadly, were not as I had hoped. Not an "epic failure," but memorable. (My wife still finds it amusing. She brings it up whenever I mention her creative use of charcoal lighter fluid as a flavoring element when smoking pheasants.)

I was upset about the failed attempt – not so much about the wasted effort, but more about wasting a perfectly good heart and liver. Over the years, heart and liver have become two of my favorite venison "cuts." One of the great pleasures I get from cooking is preparing an enjoyable meal from things that someone else might throw away. Hearts and livers fall into this category for most deer hunters. This is unfortunate because they offer some variety when serving venison, giving the adventurous home chef a definite change of pace from meatloaf, chili, and sloppy joes.

Cookbooks are still my first choice for recipe ideas and information. I've also become a big fan of television cooking shows and Google as sources of inspiration. An enthusiastic, "How did you make this?" is the end result I always strive for. What follows are a few simple recipes that I have found.



offal: [oʻfʻl] n (Cookery) a culinary term referring to the edible internal parts of an animal, such as the heart, liver, and tongue.

haggis: [hægʻs] n (Cookery) a Scottish dish made from sheep's or calf's offal, oatmeal, suet, and seasonings boiled in a skin made from the animal's stomach.

GRILLED MARINATED VENISON HEART

- Venison heart(s)
- Balsamic vinegar
- Sea salt
- Black pepper
- Fresh thyme

Trim heart(s) of fat and sinew. Slice heart(s) open and roll out flat. Continue trimming. Cut heart(s) into roughly uniform, one-inch pieces, or larger pieces that you can later slice.

Toss pieces in vinegar, salt, pepper, and thyme. Marinate for 24 hours.

Cook skewered pieces on very hot grill or loose in a skillet. High heat is important to get the desired effect. Cook about three minutes per side or five to six minutes total. Let rest for five minutes or so after removing from heat.

Serve with/on a salad, good bread, and wine.



LIVER SAUSAGE

- 1 deer liver (partially cooked to solidify the blood will make grinding easier)
- 1 deer heart
- 2 potatoes (peeled & chopped)
- ½ cup chopped onions
- 2 small celery stalks (chopped)
- 2 tablespoons salt

Grind all ingredients using the “fine” grinding plate and mix together. Add seasonings to taste (salt, pepper, garlic, etc). Case the mixture in your preference of sausage casing. If you do not have a sausage stuffer use summer sausage casings and stuff by hand. It may take some trial and error to find a technique that works for you. Make sure not to leave any space in the casing except at the top. Leave enough casing to tie it off properly. This is important for preventing leakage during the cooking process. Cook slowly in a pan of water for about an hour. When finished the sausage may also be smoked for added flavor.



LIVER DUMPLING SOUP

Soup Stock:

- 2-3 small (or 1 large) beef soup bone
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 2 stalks chopped celery
- Chopped carrots
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper

Dumplings:

- 1 lb. deer liver (partially cooked to solidify the blood will make grinding easier)
- Approximately 1 cup bread crumbs
- 2 teaspoons minced onion (browned in butter)
- 1 tablespoon flour
- Salt and pepper to taste

Roast the soup bones in the oven at a high temperature until browned then place in pot and cover with water. Add any drippings from roaster. Simmer to a low boil.

Grind liver using “fine” grinding plate. You can also use a Cuisinart, but this may affect the texture of your dumplings. Mix liver with remaining ingredients and roll into spoon-size balls. Use the flour to keep the dumpling mixture from sticking to your hands. Drop the finished dumplings into the soup. Boil uncovered for 20 minutes.

Be sure to use a big enough pot so the dumplings are not crowded on top of each other. Remove bones from soup and serve.



Paying for Wildlife Conservation

A Financial Success Story



When people think about conservation success stories, they often think of iconic species such as bald eagles, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and peregrine falcons. But long before these species rose from near extinction, there was a different kind of conservation success story – a story that involved a vision to preserve our nation’s heritage. In fact, without this story, it is very possible that many of America’s diverse wildlife species would not be here today.

The story begins more than 100 years ago when America was beginning to see the end of westward expansion. Most western territories had become states and very few wilderness areas remained unexplored. Theodore Roosevelt, one of America’s most admired presidents, had worked hard to establish the U.S. as the most powerful nation in the world. This status as a great nation, however, had come at a great cost. As a nation, we had allowed the slaughter of the buffalo (American bison) during the late 1800s, and we would soon see the extinction of the passenger pigeon and Carolina parakeet. We watched

timber companies cut millions of acres of forests to feed our appetite for inexpensive building materials and mining companies tapped the landscape for various ores and minerals. What had become a high point for our nation had become a low point for our nation’s natural resources. Even though national organizations such as the National Audubon Society were established (1905) and wildlife conservation was gaining momentum, it looked like wildlife in North America was facing its darkest hour with no way out.

Fortunately, the same president who helped establish the United States as a world power was also one of history’s greatest conservationists. Theodore Roosevelt traveled extensively, enjoying wildlife and wilderness at home and abroad. During his travels, he realized that conservation of natural resources was critical to the long-term success of a nation. As president, he had the forethought to establish the U.S. Forest Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System, as well as set aside more than 230 million acres of national monuments, national parks, and national forests. Although earlier efforts

UNITED STATES PRESIDENT
Theodore Roosevelt

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE
A. Willis Robertson
VIRGINIA



Bob Hines (left) and Ding Darling (right) both played pivotal roles in the early efforts of conservation. Hines was employed by the Division of Wildlife before accepting a position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



such as the Lacey Act of 1900 (which made it illegal to transport game animals across state lines – effectively ending the market hunting of the late 1800s) were critical to saving America’s wildlife, it was largely Roosevelt and his actions that helped set the stage for the larger conservation movement of the early 1900s.

The enthusiasm for conservation was contagious and soon the nation began to aggressively take notice of the bleak conditions facing fish and wildlife. Articles about conservation began to appear in national magazines and local conservation clubs sprang up across the nation. Additional national forests were established and new national parks began to appear on the landscape. This national movement for conservation and stewardship begged an important question: how can the nation pay for these ideals? Should general tax funds be used? Or should a user-group pay the

bill? The answer came first in 1934 when the Migratory Bird Conservation Act or “Duck Stamp Act” was enacted. The Migratory Bird Conservation Act requires hunters to purchase a federal “duck stamp,” formally known as a wetland habitat stamp, in order to hunt migratory waterfowl. The revenues earned are dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and waterfowl. The die had been cast – hunters would be the first to pay for wildlife conservation and management.

The next great legislative leap to help pay for wildlife conservation came when Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937. Often referred to as the Pittman-Robertson (P-R) Act (after U.S. Senator Key Pittman [NV] and U.S. Rep. A. Willis Robertson [VA], sponsors of the legislation), the legislation has been amended several times, but the purpose of the Act has remained the same. The Act provides stable and dedicated funding for wildlife management and research through an excise tax on firearms and

shooting supplies, including firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. In short, those who use and enjoy wildlife resources are paying for wildlife management and research when they purchase those items. This “user pay, user benefit” concept set the standard for conservation funding. It is one of the pillars of the North American model of conservation, which identifies “wildlife as a common good.” Hunters pay the majority of the annual funding spent by state fish and wildlife agencies.

Since enactment in 1937, the Pittman-Robertson Act has collected more than \$6.8 billion for wildlife conservation and management, with most of the money going to the states and territories. Each state receives an annual apportionment based on size, population, and the number of hunting licenses sold. In return, the state must provide a match for any funds they receive through the program – paid with hunting license and permit fees.

Throughout the country, nearly four million acres of wildlife habitat have been purchased with P-R funds, and an additional 40 million acres are managed with the funds. Species that were on the brink of extinction 100 years ago have made remarkable comebacks, partially due to research and restoration efforts paid for with the P-R funds. When habitat is restored or managed for wildlife, ALL species benefit.

Seventy-five years later, a more effective and efficient wildlife success story cannot be found anywhere. Any way you look at it, the “good old days of wildlife conservation” are today. Many wildlife populations are at all time highs – hunting and wildlife watching have never been better, due in part to the foresight of a couple of legislators and their conservation-minded colleagues 75 years ago. Without their tenacity and thoughtfulness, we may not have many of the wonderful wildlife species that we all know and enjoy.



1935 Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp - The first federal duck stamp -



ICE FISHING BASICS FOR BUCKEYE ANGLERS

by Matthew D. Wolfe

Fisheries Biologist, Ohio Division of Wildlife



As any Ohioan can tell you, if you don't like the weather, wait a minute, and it will change. Warm fall temperatures can disappear overnight, leaving behind winter's first flakes of the season. But before you know it, tulips will be popping up in yards across the state. Savvy anglers who ice fish in the Buckeye State realize this, so they know that preparation is the key to enjoying this fishing opportunity or be left, quite literally, out in the cold.

But when is the ice safe? Ice anglers know that "no ice is safe ice." While thickness is one consideration, the kind of ice is another. Clear ice is the strongest. Cloudy ice, where air bubbles and snow are mixed in, has thawed and refrozen and is not as good because there can be areas of weakness. Be aware of areas with moving water, which creates weak or thin ice. Use your auger or chip a hole in the ice with a spud bar or axe to check the ice thickness.

If you go ice fishing, follow the Boy Scout motto and "be prepared." Try to fish around other ice anglers so if you do fall through,

someone might be able to help you get out. When walking around on the ice, wear a life jacket and dress appropriately to prevent hypothermia. You'll also want to bring along an extra change of clothes just in case of an emergency, and put your cell phone in a plastic bag in case you do fall through.

Because fish don't strike as aggressively in the winter, you'll want to use lighter gear, lighter line, and smaller baits. You can increase your odds by tipping artificial lures with live bait. Sluggish fish are much more likely to hit on a minnow-tipped jig as opposed to one with a plastic worm. Some anglers also use small bobbers as strike indicators.

Tip-ups are another common method of ice fishing and come in a wide variety of designs. Essentially, they involve a spool of line hanging in the water with bait attached. Most store bought versions feature a signaling device, such as a flag, that pops up when a fish takes the bait. In Ohio, anglers can have up to six tip-ups going at one time, and each must be labeled with the owner's name and address.

What's biting down below? Normally, you can catch the same species when ice fishing as you hooked during the summer months, including crappie, bluegill, bass, catfish, perch, walleye, and saugeye. In fact, some of the most sought after ice fish are saugeyes because they are so active in the winter. Drop your line through an ice hole on a farm pond and you'll likely be pulling up some tasty panfish, such as bluegill and crappie. For bait, try using a tiny ice jig or fly and tipping it with wax worms.

BEFORE YOU HIT THE ICE:

- ◆ Tell someone who is not fishing with you where you are going and how long you will be out. Check in with them when you return or if any changes are made to your plan.
- ◆ Have a valid Ohio fishing license.
- ◆ Know the size limits and bag limits for the fish that you hope to catch.
- ◆ Learn the ice fishing regulations for where you are fishing.
- ◆ Make a checklist of things you will need to have fun and be safe.





CONSERVATIONIST CORNER

JIM DOLAN

by Jim McCormac
Avian Education Specialist, Ohio Division of Wildlife



Little Beaver Creek in Columbiana County is one of Ohio's wildest streams. It was the first of only three Buckeye State rivers to be designated a "wild river," and a canoeist or kayaker floating its rapids will be immersed in some of the most picturesque landscapes to be found in the Midwest.

Few people know Little Beaver Creek and its critters as well as Jim Dolan. His day gig is as a TV production studio engineer at Youngstown State University, but Dolan is a consummate outdoorsman and spends much of his spare time exploring the remote reaches of Little Beaver Creek. A lifelong birder, Jim has documented dozens of nesting species in the Little Beaver Creek valley, including several rare breeders.

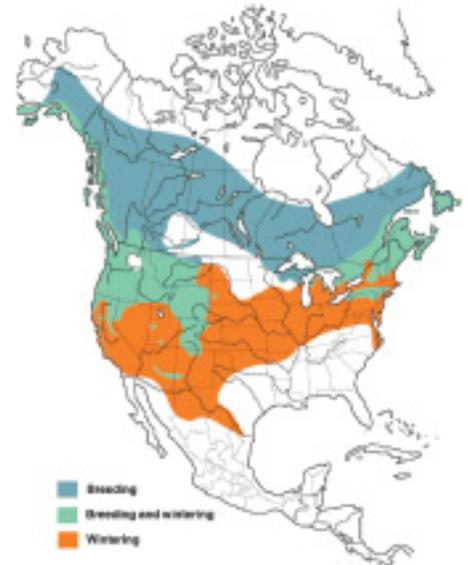
In the early 2000's, Dolan began to notice common mergansers lingering on the creek well into spring. The common merganser is a giant of a duck, weighing in at 3 pounds and measuring over two-feet from bill tip to tail. Like other mergansers, this species feeds almost exclusively on fish. As common mergansers nest along high quality

streams, Jim suspected that breeding was occurring locally, and he kept a sharp eye out for evidence of nesting.

Finally, on May 30th, 2006, Dolan struck pay dirt when he witnessed a hen merganser escorting six downy chicks. This was the first confirmed record of common mergansers nesting in Ohio. As this duck is a cavity-nesting species, Dolan began to explore the possibility of placing suitable nest boxes. After securing a grant from the Little Beaver Creek Land Foundation, Jim and fellow conservationist Dan Justice constructed ten merganser-appropriate nest boxes, and placed them at strategic points along the creek.

His efforts have born fruit. A spring 2011 float down Little Beaver with the Wild Ohio TV crew produced over 20 adult mergansers, and females with broods of downy young – which sometimes ride on the hen's back – have been spotted every year since Dolan's "merganser nest box trail" was initiated.

Jim Dolan's work has not only helped bolster Little Beaver Creek's common merganser population, it has turned the duck into a mascot for the stream. Conservation efforts that keep Little Beaver clean and healthy enough to support nesting mergansers will also help protect a myriad other aquatic organisms. And big, charismatic ducks make for great ambassadors!





READER'S PHOTOS

IMAGES FROM AROUND THE OHIO

Wild Ohio magazine receives so many photos annually that we cannot possibly publish all of our readers' photos. However, the Division of Wildlife's online photo gallery lets our *Wild Ohio* readers and other wildlife enthusiasts post their photos. To post photos on the website, go to wildohio.com.



BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER
PHOTO BY: TERRY LUTZ

FROM THE GALLERY

An uncommon sighting was posted on the Ohio Ornithological Society (OOS)'s Ohio-birds email list, this photo of a black-throated gray warbler was captured by Terry Lutz and posted to the division's photo gallery, at wildohio.com. To sign up for the email forum, visit ohiobirds.org.

TO SEE MORE, VISIT WILDOHIO.COM



I spotted this praying mantis while in the front yard watering the flowers.

~ Carrie Cichocki, Cuyahoga County



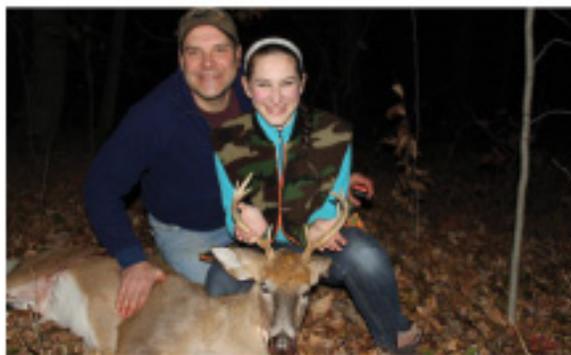
This picture of a red fox and her kits was taken right in our backyard!

~ Bruce and Glenna Beaver, Butler County



Late one September morning my son and I saw this coyote in a harvested soybean field north of the U.S. 33 Lancaster Bypass.

~ Joy Davis, Fairfield County



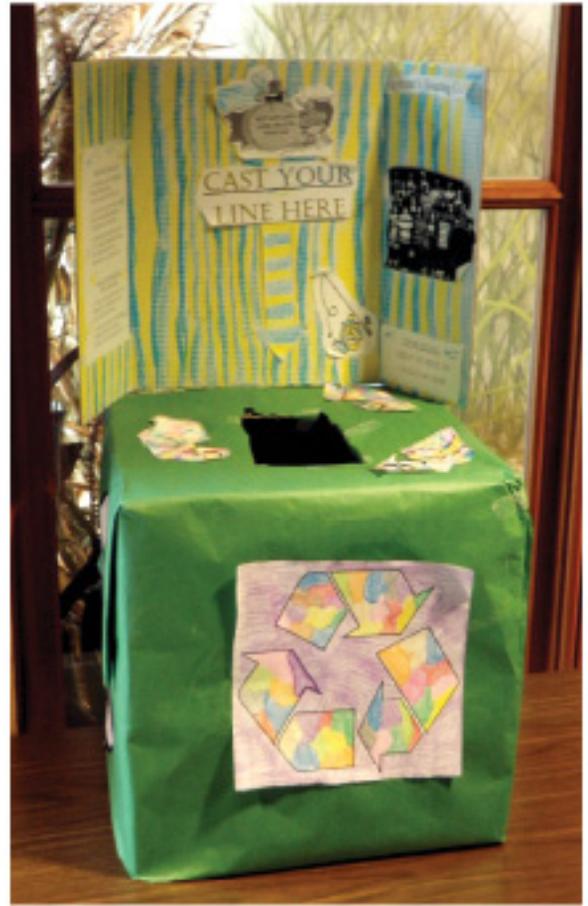
Madelyn, age 14, with dad, Andy harvested her first deer using a crossbow from a ground blind in Delaware County.

~ Kendra Wecker, Delaware County



My son Connor was 14 years old last November when he shot his first deer with a compound bow. Earlier that day he shot two pheasants at a local youth hunt. It was an incredible day of hunting!

~ Dave Burkitt, Pike County



One of several fishing line recycling boxes provided by Erwine Intermediate Students (see Wild Things on page 5 for details).

~ Jamey Graham, Summit County



I saw this cicada coming out of its exoskeleton while I was mowing the yard.

~ Nate Settlemire, Franklin County



Once and a while this rat snake will raid the chicken coop. A couple of eggs on occasion is a small price to pay for free rodent control!

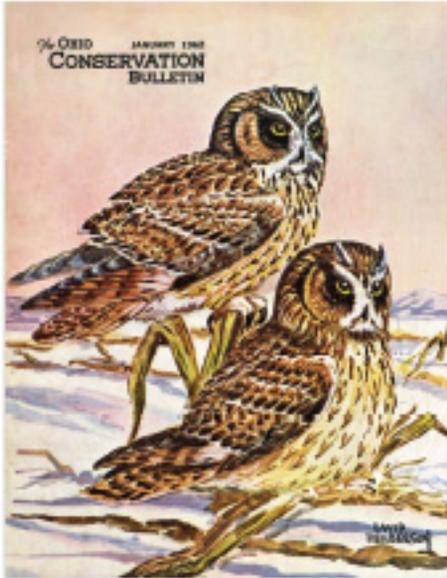
~ Ann Bonner, Morgan County



THIS ISSUE IN HISTORY

JANUARY 1962 • 50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

by Susie Vance



A look back at magazines published by the Division of Wildlife - from The Conservation Bulletin, the Non-Game Quarterly, and earlier versions of today's Wild Ohio Magazine.

Where were you in 1962? John Glenn was making history as the first American to orbit the Earth, while Sam Walton was embarking on an entrepreneurial adventure in Bentonville Arkansas by opening a new discount store called “Wal-Mart.” John F. Kennedy was President of the United States, with Linden B. Johnson as his VP. Americans paid \$.31 a gallon for gasoline, earned \$1.15 an hour for minimum wage, and tuned in to television favorites including Red Skelton and The Beverly Hillbillies.

Fifty years ago, the Ohio Division of Wildlife published the January 1962 issue of The Conservation Bulletin – a monthly installment of wildlife news from around the state. The Bulletin was a 36-page staple in the homes of wildlife conservationists who paid \$2 a year for their subscriptions. Feature articles in this particular issue ranged from fish management to fox tracking to environmental education. Here’s a look at the articles printed in January 1962:

SPORTSMAN GAME SURVEY

BY ROD COCHRAN

Sixty-two members of Troy Fish and Game Club in Miami County took part in a “game census” of the area. The group surveyed the local wildlife in both the spring and fall with maps, rules, and direction provided by local Game Protector Charles (Ted) Cashner. The count included pheasants, quail, crows, doves, squirrels, hawks, woodchucks, dogs, and cats.

FOX TRACKING • THE WOODSMAN'S SPORT

BY MERRILL C. GILFILLAN

The author follows retired Division of Wildlife employee Frank Hard as he traversed Fayette County in pursuit of hunting fox. The expert provided tips on locating and trailing the elusive furbearer, commenting that “following a fresh fox track is like reading a book, and each track tells you a lot about the individual fox.”

CONSERVATION ED. IN 4-H CAMPING

BY THOMAS STOCKDALE

“The majority of young people today do not look to the farm as a source of fresh eggs and cream, they look to the supermarket.” The author, an Ohio State University Extension Service Specialist, justified a relatively new program designed to bring fish and wildlife conservation to Ohio’s youth through 4-H camp.

FOR WALLEYE EGGS: SEA-GOING VACUUM CLEANER

BY ROD COCHRAN

This account of a day in the life of studying walleye populations described a new method of egg collection on Lake Erie. The “egg pumper” (a breakthrough in technology) was developed to help biologists understand why there had been a recent drop in walleye production from what biologists and anglers referred to as “fishing’s fabulous fifties.”

AQUAMANIA

BY ROBERT W. COPELAN

U.S. Army Corps engineer General Jackson Graham described the growing importance of impounded waterways for recreation, and some of the processes that are involved in constructing these areas.

CASTALIA'S DUCK HAVEN

BY DOC KIRBY

According to Kirby, and the 736 residents of Castalia, the spring fed pond in the middle of town was the best place around to observe flocks of migrating waterfowl in the spring and fall.

DO INSECTS HARM WILDLIFE?

BY MERRILL C. GILFILLAN

In an attempt to control forest pests by aerial spray of insecticides, a research project was developed to determine the effect that pesticides and the possibility of removing insects from the ecosystem would have on wildlife. A 28-year old Robert Giles led the field research, conducted on 40-acres of forest land located in Dover, Ohio. Giles worked to survey and catalog all wild species found on the property, and planned to spray half of the area with insecticide the next year to determine if there was any effect on wildlife populations.

COMMENTS FROM THE COLUMNISTS

BY BOB COPELAN

A compilation of fish and wildlife topics and articles from legendary local outdoor columnists including Lew Klewer of the Toledo Blade, Clarence Mosteller of the Mt. Washington Press, Bob Rankin of the Cincinnati Enquirer, John Anderson of the Freemont News Messenger, Phil Dietrich of the Akron Beacon Journal, Hank Andrews of the Cleveland Press, and Lou Campbell of the Toledo Times.

WILD GAME GOURMET

RECIPES

as seen on WildOhio Television
hosted by Vicki Mountz, Ohio Division of Wildlife

RED WINE BRINE for PHEASANT

WHAT YOU'LL NEED



- 4 pheasant breasts (skin on)
- 1 small branch of thyme
- 3 large garlic cloves
- 2 oz. of kosher salt
- 1½ oz. of peppercorn
- 1½ oz. of sugar
- ½ bay leaf
- ½ star anise
- 1 bottle of red wine

WHAT YOU'LL DO

If necessary, de-bone pheasant and set the breast aside. Combine and stir all ingredients in a large, oven-safe sauce pan and bring to a boil; set aside for 15 minutes. Submerge pheasant breast in cooled brine and place in refrigerator for 6 hours. Drain and pan sear in olive oil over medium-high heat; about 1 to 2 minutes per side depending on the size of the breast. Remove pan from heat and finish cooking in a 400°F oven for about 5 to 7 minutes. Pheasant will come out medium rare to medium.

Move to cutting board and let rest for 1 to 2 minutes. Cut ¼ to ¾-inch slices on an angle. Arrange on plate and serve.

Contributed by Chef Richard Blondin
THE REFECTORY RESTAURANT • COLUMBUS, OHIO



SPICY VENISON and HOMINY SOUP

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 1 lb ground venison
- 2½ cups chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 2 cups diced onion
- 2 tablespoons chipotle chili powder
- 1½ teaspoons smoked paprika
- 1½ teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1½ cups chopped green pepper
- 1 to 2 medium cloves minced garlic
- 1-14.5oz can fire-roasted tomatoes
- Olive oil
- 1-32oz can hominy
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt



WHAT YOU'LL DO

Combine venison with spices. Heat stock-pot or soup pan, add oil to hot pan and cook venison until meat is not pink (try not to overcook meat, it will cook more later). Remove venison from heat and place into separate bowl. Using the same pan, heat oil and sauté onions and peppers for three to five minutes. Add garlic and allow to cook 1 minute. Add chicken broth, hominy, tomatoes, and venison back to the pan. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and allow to heat for 10 to 15 minutes.





Wild Ohio Magazine
 2045 Morse Road, Bldg. G
 Columbus, OH 43229-6693



MADE IN OHIO FOR OHIO

Attention Wild Ohio Readers:

Wild Ohio Magazine will soon transition into a paid membership. The Division of Wildlife staff has been researching this option for several years. Membership “dues” (a paid subscription) will be used to defer some of the printing and mailing cost associated with *Wild Ohio*. Memberships will be annual (valid 365 days from the day of purchase), and each paying member will receive six issues of *Wild Ohio*. Each issue will still include a variety of wild topics like fishing, hunting, birding, photography, and more. Memberships will no longer be free, but will remain as affordable as we can possibly make them.

More details about the new memberships will be coming soon, so please stay tuned to upcoming issues for more information on how to sign up for your *Wild Ohio* membership.

If you are receiving your magazine, there is no need to renew your membership until there is a notice in the magazine. Renewing your membership early can cause duplication of mailing.

Please let us know if you receive an extra copy, and we can adjust your account right away.



**GET YOUR FIX
 WITH SIX**