



# Flight Patterns

www.tri-moraineaudubon.org

FALL 2021

Serving Allen, Auglaize,  
Hancock, Hardin, Logan,  
Mercer, Shelby, and Van  
Wert counties

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## Volunteer Opportunities...

The **Christmas Bird Count** will be held Saturday, December 18 and Sunday, December 19 for Grand Lake and Indian Lake. More information will be coming in the Winter newsletter.

**No Bird Seed Sale**—There will be no bird seed sale this fall!

**TMAS Board Meeting** - The next TMAS Board meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. September 28 in the OSU Visitor/Student Center on Campus Drive at OSU-Lima. At this time we are planning to meet in person.

## TO FEED or NOT to FEED...

By Jeannine C. Roediger

We are all hearing the recommendations, "Don't feed the birds," due to an unidentified illness. Of course this time of year there is plenty of food available for our birds. Even more so if you have added some native plants and provided other trees and shrubs to support their habits.

For now I have suspended feeding the birds in my yard. Recommendations coming from The Cornell University of Ornithology, Audubon and wildlife organizations, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are all recommending we suspend feeding wild birds at this time.

Here is what we know. According to the Cornell Lab, the illness is not caused by any major known bird diseases. Species most affected include juvenile Blue Jays, Common Grackles, European Starlings and American Robins. It is not known if it is a virus, bacteria, parasitical or environmental.

They are not sure, at this time, how it is transmitted. It causes crusty eyes, tremors and paralysis. The illness has been found in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana and the District of Columbia.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service we can minimize the harm to birds by following these procedures if we continue feeding birds. 1) Clean your feeders at least once very two weeks, using a weak bleach solution. Hummingbird feeders should be cleaned every 3-5 days, recommendations say to use a vinegar solution not bleach for them.

2) Clean up old, moldy and discarded seeds which reduces disease risk and discourages rodents, raccoons and other predators.

3) Watch your feeders and if you see sickly birds, remove the feeder.

4) If there are cats around, rethink having a feeder. Cats kill millions of birds each year.

5) Be careful of where you put your feeders for if they are close to a reflective window they pose a threat. Covering windows with screens or putting decals on the window will reduce this hazard.

6) View birds in their natural habitat such as nature preserves or wildlife refuges rather than drawing them in to your feeder.

(Continued on page 2)



**Feed or Not to Feed Continued...** The U.S. Wildlife Service notes that we feed the birds more for ourselves rather than for their needs. By feeding them we are putting them at risk, something bird lovers do not want to do.

But some studies do show that feeding during migration and harsh weather benefits birds. By following the above guidelines we can reduce the risk and still enjoy our feathered friends. It does, however, take due responsibility to make sure your feeders stay clean. For now I will not feed them, but will reconsider when harsh weather returns.

## **COAC to Hold Fall Gathering...**

COAC (Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters) will hold their 2021 Fall Gathering on Saturday, October 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, located at 505 W. Whittier Street in Columbus.

Kenn Kaufman will be the keynote speaker. Additional speakers will include Darlene Sillick, one of our own Ohio Young Birders, Rebecca Swab from the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, and more. They may even have a surprise or two! There will be helpful hints and real projects for collaboration among chapters and between chapters and other organizations. Experience it and you'll agree: **It's for the birds!**

There will also be special Friday evening activities and great social opportunities to work with your colleagues from across Ohio.

They'll showcase the best the Columbus has to offer to make your meeting both fun and productive. The Grange Insurance Audubon Center provides a home for Audubon Great Lakes in Ohio and for *all* Ohio Chapters. Come join us and tour the home of Audubon in Ohio.

Tri-Moraine Chapter members wishing to attend or to learn more about the gathering may contact our Chapter representative Judy Jacomet at 419.236.1744. *Submitted by Judy Jacomet*

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## **Solar Panels...**

**Disclaimer:** *"The following article was written by Michael Wildermuth, a Tri-Moraine member, who started a coalition to support the Auglaize-Allen County solar project. It does not represent the views of all Tri-Moraine Audubon members. The Tri Moraine Audubon Society is remaining neutral on the subject."*

"I've been an Audubon member for longer than I can clearly recall. Over the years, I've noticed that even insects have disappeared, so what about the birds? I recall the first Earth Day and have heard the warnings from scientists for the last half-century that we are altering the planet in ways that may be hard to stabilize or reverse.

I first heard of the Birch Solar Farm last fall and was taken aback as the coverage seemed to focus exclusively on possible negative aspects of the project. It was my perception that solar energy was clean and good and helps us address environmental issues. I contacted some of the environmental organizations of which I am a member to learn whether my thinking was outdated.

**Continued on next column...**



## **Solar Panels Continued...**

I am webmaster for our Tri Moraine Audubon group, and our board had a couple of virtual meetings with the Birch Solar folks, one in March and one in May, also attended by regional and National Audubon Society representatives. I found that National Audubon "strongly supports renewable energy – including solar, wind, and geothermal power – that is properly sited in ways that avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts on birds and other wildlife."

I also found that Birch Solar seemed genuinely interested in our input. They stated that their goal as a company is to have a net gain in bio-diversity and they mentioned their intention to plant for pollinators. However, our folks mentioned that "plantings for pollinators provide food but natives provide habitat" and strongly encouraged them to "plant native trees!" as screens. They listened to us.

But, as time went on, I became increasingly concerned that the public was only hearing one side of the story concerning the project. It got to the point that I thought, if no one else is going to speak up for the benefits, I guess I'll have to do it myself. And I formed a small group of concerned citizens and named it the Allen Auglaize Coalition for Reasonable Energy and began engaging the media and the local community.

We are currently gathering names on a petition in support of the Birch Solar Farm to prove to the siting authority that there is community support for the project here. The Tri-Moraine Board did not take action to issue a public endorsement in support of the project as requested by the company nor issued a statement expressing disapproval of the project as requested by those opposing the project.

However, the Board did resolve to permit my organization to collect signatures on our petition at the society's table at the Allen County Fair in recognition of the stance of national Audubon: "Our own science shows that unless we slow the rise of global temperatures, two-thirds of North America's birds could face extinction. Renewable energy, like solar power, is key to reducing pollution and holding temperatures steady."

No issue is black or white and others may reach a different conclusion than we have. We understand and we support their right to their point of view. But, if you are a resident of Allen or Auglaize counties or the Apollo JVSD and would like to sign our petition, you will find it at <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/support-solar-in-allen-and-auglaize-counties>

**Submitted by Michael Wildermuth**

## Program Meetings Coming Soon...

All program meetings will be held at the Visitor and Student Services Center on the OSU Lima campus.

**September 7, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. - Bats**—Keith Lott is a wildlife biologist with US Fish and Wildlife Service. Much of his time is spent studying bats. His presentation is a review of the bat species that occur in Ohio and some of the research that is being conducted within the state. In addition, we'll be discussing acoustic monitoring, citizen science opportunities, and what the public can do to support bats.

If you cannot be with us in-person, you may join via Zoom by registering in advance: <https://osu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcoce2ggjgpH9BO8vnsK2i7x5oBdZpVvqLZ>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**October 5, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.—Charismatic Avifauna of the Tri-Moraine Region: Updates on Swans, Cranes, and Raptors** - Dr. Laura Kearns has been a wildlife biologist with the Olentangy Research Station (Columbus) at the Ohio Division of Wildlife for seven years. She oversees monitoring, research, and management of forest and wetland birds of greatest conservation need.

Specific species or groups of species she works with include bald eagles, peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans, sandhill cranes, secretive marshbirds (bitterns, rails), and colonial waterbirds, including common terns. She serves on the Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture Technical Committee, Mississippi Flyway Council Nongame Bird Technical Section, and the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative Steering Committee and Conservation/Research Planning Committee.

If you cannot be with us in-person, you may join via Zoom by registering in advance: <https://osu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAtcuCsgToiGN0TSEL97EaA9DQDtvFZmYp>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**November 2, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.—Fungi of Ohio**—Dr. Curtis Young is a biologist with the Ohio State University Extension in Van Wert. His studies have included insects and fungi as well as natural resources. He will speak about fungi of Ohio.

If you cannot be with us in-person, you may join via Zoom by registering in advance: <https://osu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUduiqqTsqG9b2ARAC-clF9Q0e5JqrN7fyf>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the meeting.

Submitted by Nancy Risner



## Field Trips...

**Fall Warblers at Baker Woods** - Saturday, September 25th - 1 p.m.

Join us for an early fall walk through one of the old-growth forest remnants in this area at Baker Woods State Nature Preserve. We'll check out the 1.3 mile loop trail, looking for all things nature but focusing on fall warblers! Meet at Baker Woods (4316 Saint Anthony Road, Coldwater, OH 45828) at 1 p.m. and be prepared for 1.5-2 hours on the trail.

**Autumn Colors at Myeerah** - Sunday, October 17th - 4 p.m.

Myeerah Nature Preserve is a 450 acre natural area maintained by Bellefontaine Joint Recreation District. TMAS has been intimately



involved with its acquisition and its ongoing conservation. While we've all heard about it and we host Environmental Ed Weekend there in the spring, many of us haven't witnessed the preserve in all its autumn glory – now's the time! Meet at the Myeerah Lodge (7405 OH-540, Bellefontaine, OH 43311) at 4 p.m. and be prepared for 1.5-2 hours on the trail

**Grand Lake St Mary's Fish Hatchery**, and more! - Saturday, November 13th, 10 a.m.

November brings the last chance to catch the dawdlers of migrating birds as they head south for the winter. While our songbirds have moved on, a lot of waterfowl species are still passing through. We'll meet at the Fish Hatchery (01735 Feeder Rd St Marys, OH 45885) and see what we can find before moving on to good birding spots nearby for as long as the group is interested.





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**FALL 2021 Newsletter**

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### ***President's Message...***

It has become clear to me that what I like most about the Tri-Moraine Audubon Society are the people. You! It's the people I miss the most.

The people will be the main reason I attend the meetings and the field trips. Starting in September for the program meeting we will be meeting in person once again. We may need to wear masks again as the mandates change but that's an acceptable precaution for those of us who are vaccinated.

I will be near the door of the OSU-Lima Welcome Center where we've met in the past to tell everyone who attends how good it is to see them. Perhaps you've never attended a meeting. I hope you'll join us. There will be new and old friends there, and refreshments, and an interesting program. If you're not ready to join the crowd yet, we will be streaming the meeting live for you to watch at home via computer.

As you read through this newsletter, you'll see the efforts of many dedicated volunteers. I can't thank the TMAS Board members and volunteer leaders for donating so much time and doing so much work to keep the chapter functioning. I recently found a map of the Audubon chapters in Ohio and noticed that there is no Audubon chapter listed in the Toledo or Marion area and no recent activity on the Dayton Audubon Facebook page or website.

The difference of course is our volunteers. I'm not going to appeal for more volunteers here, but I hope that you appreciate the dedication of our active chapter volunteers like Susan, Marie, Dan, Judy, Evelyn, Zach, David, Danielle, William, Nancy, Jeannine, Don, Anne, Leslie, Eric, Jamie, Jennifer, Carol, Bob, and so many others. You keep this chapter going strong...THANK YOU! I hope to see you all again sometime soon!

Eric

