



Audubon *News and Views*

Canton Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society
Established 1962

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NORTHERN FLICKER

By Chris Dyer

Mission:

The Canton Audubon Society mission is to promote the enjoyment, protection, and conservation of birds, wildlife, plants, and their habitat in order to maintain Earth's biodiversity.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:

Canton Audubon Society is dedicated to welcoming everyone of all races, ethnicities, religions, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, ages, and abilities. To accomplish this, we will identify obstacles and improve opportunities for diverse audiences to pursue nature activities.

Membership:

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically a member of Canton Audubon Society.

Meetings & Contacts

Meetings are free and open to the public. They are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7pm from September thru May.

Location: Stark Parks
Exploration Gateway, Sippo Lake
5712 12th St NW,
Canton, Ohio 44708.

Visit www.CantonAudubon.org
Or email:
CantonAudubonSociety@gmail.com

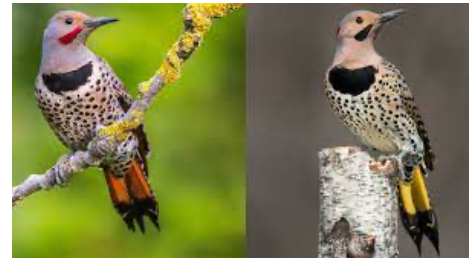
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nonprofit organization

*Denotes kid-friendly articles



Unusual for a woodpecker, the Northern Flicker's behavior can confuse people and it is often not recognized as a woodpecker by non-birders. After all, most woodpeckers spend the majority of their time on trees, while the flicker spends much of its time on the ground probing ant colonies with their tongue. It also perches upright in branches like a passerine; which few other woodpeckers do. The flicker has two color morphs; the yellow-shafted color-morph in the eastern US and the red-shafted in the west. Currently considered the same species, it is possible we are seeing the early stages of evolution into two separate species. The male can be separated from the female by his "mustache" which is black in the yellow-shafted morph and red in the red-shafted.



Left: Red shafted male Flicker.

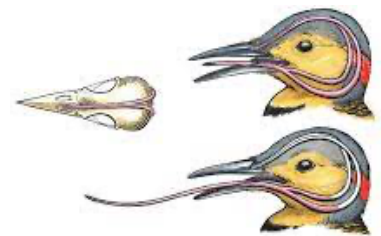
Right: Yellow-shafted male Flicker.



CChen

The name flicker is believed to come from the bird's white rump patch which it flashes or "flicks" when it takes to flight. Its scientific name (*Colaptes auratus*) means "golden chisel"; a reference to the feather shafts and the hammering of its beak.

As mentioned, the flicker specializes in eating ants. One flicker had over 5,000 ants in its stomach. They also eat fruits, seeds, and suet; especially in winter when insects are harder to find. All woodpeckers can extend their tongue out nearly half their body length. (approx. 5" inches in a flicker). It is used to probe for ants and other insects. When done feeding, it reels the extra tongue length back in and out of the way. To make this possible the tongue extends through the mouth and wraps behind the skull until it finally attaches at the base of the right nostril. It collapses in on itself like an old radio antenna.



Since they are not passerines, flickers don't technically "sing" but they do vocalize frequently. Like most woodpeckers their voice is reminiscent of a crazed laugh. To many, their voice is extremely similar to the Pileated Woodpecker. It has been said that the flicker is as steady "as an honest accountant" when calling, while the



Pileated’s call tends to rise, fall, and alter speed. For courtship, they use drumming, as opposed to singing and look for surfaces that create the loudest noises. Examples are barn doors and even aluminum siding. Despite banging their beak repeatedly against hardened surfaces at high speeds, they do not suffer brain damage. Woodpeckers have small brains which are packed tightly inside their skulls, which means there is little space for the brain to move around and potentially get bruised. Its brain is oriented so that if it shifts within the skull, a larger area of the brain contacts the skull; meaning the force of collision is absorbed over a large surface

area of the brain. This causes less damage than if all the force was directed at a single spot in the brain. Woodpecker brains are also surrounded by a thick, plate-like spongy bone. This helps it absorb and lessen the force of impact. Woodpeckers have a third, inner eyelid which prevents the eyeball from popping out during impact when it pecks.

Flickers are cavity nesters in dead and decaying trees but have been known to use nest boxes and occasionally even use abandoned bank swallow or kingfisher burrows. They lay 5-8 eggs. Like other woodpeckers, the flicker usually excavates a new hole each breeding season, leaving old nest holes to be used for other birds such as Tree Swallows, Bluebirds and other cavity nesters. Despite being “common” in Ohio, overall populations of Flickers are declining. One possible reason is competition with more aggressive Starlings over nesting holes.



Did You Know...

The Northern Flicker has more common names than any other bird? There are approximately 90 to 133 names, depending on how you sort variances in spelling or wording. Hairy-wicket; Meadow Partridge; Shad-spirit; Weather Hen are a few unusual examples. (Google them!)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ▶ **Board member updates:** We would like to welcome Teresa Kaminski as our newest board member; it is her first time serving as a CAS director. Returning board members are Marlene Bolea, Linda Chen, Myra McCoy and Scott Watkins with Myra serving as our new Treasurer. All position officially began June 1, 2023. We would like to thank Laura Brown (previous Treasurer) and Ronnie Macko for their years of service as CAS board members. There is one open director’s position available. If you are interested, please contact CantonAudubonSociety@gmail.com
- ▶ **Membership renewal:** The new fiscal year began June 1, 2023 and membership renewals are due. As before, they are \$20 for an individual or family and can be paid via check or via PayPal at our website CantonAudubon.org . If you paid a Bluebird or Screech Owl membership (\$50 or more) within the past two years or have sent any amount since January 2023, your membership does not expire until at least June 2024. If you are not sure of your membership status, email Laura Dornan at tldornan68@att.net . See the CAS May/June newsletter online for more information.
- ▶ **Open Committee chairs:** Laura Dornan would like to retire as Membership Committee chair. The Nominating Committee chair has been open for several years. Please contact Linda Chen or Laura Dornan if you are interested in joining either committee. CantonAudubonSociety@gmail.com or tldornan68@att.net
- ▶ **CAS Picnic, Wednesday, June 21st** will be held at the Boat Shelter again this year, located on the east side of Sippo Lake, Tyner Rd (east entrance) just off of Perry Drive. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share, CAS will provide chicken. You will need to bring a plate, utensils, napkins and drink. Begin to arrive at 5:15pm for time to set-up. Parking is available in the upper lot or below at the marina with wheelchair accessibility. Pre-picnic walk is at 4pm, meet in the Tyner Rd parking lot.
- ▶ **Masthead photo:** This month’s Cardinal photo (a fledgling) was taken by CAS member Chris Dyer.
- ▶ **CAS E-newsletters** can be found online at the CAS website; CantonAudubon.org - click “Newsletters”.

Save the Date!!
September 15 & 16th – 1st Annual Stark County Bird Quest

The Stark County Bird Quest is a 24-hour challenge. This family-friendly event is free including introductory workshops, information on where to go birding, guided walks during the event, and the celebration at the end. Teams can be as few as two people and as many as you want (rules will be provided for birding together – teams are not permitted to “divide and conquer”). Team names are encouraged and can be funny or serious, but creativity is rewarded! Because teams can be comprised of beginners and life-long birders, we will offer awards (certificates suitable for framing) for things like “Most Species Reported”, “Most Warblers Reported”, “Most Habitats Visited”, “Most Parks/Preserves Visited”, “Most Creative Team Name”, and so on.

A celebration at the end of the 24-hour event will be our way of bringing teams together for fellowship and a recap of the previous 24 hours. This event is being organized by Adam Zorn, more details to come.

BIRDING TIPS FOR NEW (& NOT SO NEW) BIRDERS 

This is the tenth tip in the series. While the tips offered here may seem to be directed towards people new to birding, we are sure that even those who have been birding for decades will find some tidbits of helpful information.

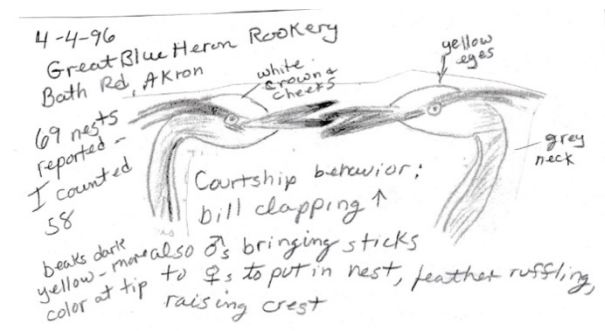
FIELD NOTEBOOK

by Laura Dornan

I have no skill as an artist and I never had much desire to write or keep a journal. Nevertheless, when I first became interested in learning more about the birds I would see coming to my backyard feeders and venturing further afield to find and identify other species (in other words, when I became a *birder*), I also began to hear advice that the best way to learn about birds is to keep a field journal. I was told “leave your field guide at home, take a field notebook and a pencil.” The idea is that without the field guide at hand, you will have to pay more attention to and remember the details of what the bird looks like. And if you write down those details, or better yet, sketch them, the bird will become more fixed in your mind. You will notice things you never would have, had you just looked only long enough to find the field marks necessary to identify the bird in your field guide.



That was a hard concept to accept but I tried. Well, at least in part. I couldn't quite bring myself to leave the field guide at home. But I did take the notebook and pencil, especially when I was in the field alone so that I could spend time sitting by myself. And I continue to keep a field notebook on at least some birding outings. It really has made me a better birder, has made each of those outings more pleasurable and relaxing, and as a bonus, provided a means of remembering details of long-ago outings I otherwise would have lost. I still have no skill as an artist nor an intense desire to keep a detailed journal in other aspects of my life. But I have gotten better at both. I don't do this as often as I used to or should. But keeping a field notebook continues to be a worthy endeavor. Try it. I think you will be surprised by the benefits you will receive.



I am including here some excerpts of entries I have made over the years. While making these entries, I have always been able to do these drawings, etc. knowing that no one else would ever see them. They were strictly for my eyes only, to help me know and remember the birds and habitats better. But I also realize that if I think it is important for you the reader to understand how field journalism works, I must set my vanity aside. You are not creating art; you are documenting memories & learning to KNOW birds.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

**All upcoming programs will be both in-person and via Zoom except December*

September 20, 2023 at 7 pm

“Growing Joy: finding wonder in our native backyards” by Carrie Elvey

Each year, more and more people are converting lawns to native landscapes, adding water and food sources for wildlife, and reducing chemical use in their backyards. This landscaping for wildlife is richly rewarding, but it can also be a lot of work. This program will help you regain your childhood sense of wonder among the native plants you have nurtured. And if you haven't jumped on the native landscape bandwagon yet, you'll go home with resources to help you get started. **Pre-meeting bird walk** at 5:30pm, meet at EG south facing balcony.



October 18, 2023 at 7 pm

“The Pribilof Islands: Alaska's Puffin Paradise” by Jeff Hall

Venture to a tiny island group in the Bering Sea. Here, along with the world's largest breeding colony of fur seals, we'll find a wealth of nesting seabirds: fulmars, cormorants, kittiwakes, and alcids in abundance, including murrelets, three species of auklets, and both tufted and horned puffins. Jeffrey Hall is President of Bartramian Audubon Society and has been an instructor at Slippery Rock University. His photographs and articles have appeared in Living Bird, Birding, NJ Audubon, Underwater Naturalist, Cassinia, and others. Hall collaborated on the recently published book, 'Birds of Venango County'. **Pre-meeting bird walk** at 5:30pm, meet at EG south facing balcony.

November 15, 2023 at 7 pm

TBA

December 6, 2023 at 7pm, Holiday Dinner

“The ‘Nature’ of Christmas Symbols” by Chuck Jakubchak

For hundreds of years Christmas celebrations have been intertwined with nature as plants, trees, and the environment serve as a backdrop for the holiday. Many of those elements still remain but their meaning and relevance has been overshadowed by cultural change and commercialism. This seasonal program will remind the audience of why we decorate with wreaths and erect evergreens. **Dinner will be served at 6:30pm, program to follow.**



CAS BIRD/NATURE WALKS

June 24	Field trip to Bobolinks and Butterflies Festival at Byers Woods, Ashland.
July 8	Norma Johnson Center nature walk in Dover at 9:00 am, coinciding with the butterfly exhibit July 6-16. *Meet at Norma Johnson Center Red Barn, 3645 Conservation Dr, Dover, OH 44622.

The Norma Johnson Center, part of TuscParks, is a 303-acre Conservation Center and Nature Preserve with over 6-miles of natural surface hiking trails. The butterfly exhibit is from July 6-16. <https://normajohnsoncenter.com>
Join Scott Watkins on July 8 for a bird and nature walk (see above information).



Huston Brumbaugh Nature Center Guided Bird Walk - naturecenter@mountunion.edu

Thursday, August 10 | 8:30-10 a.m. Guided bird walk on the Nature Center trails. Easy, casual walk in search of summer resident bird species. Great for all ages. Bring binoculars or borrow ours (limited availability).

CLENDENING LAKE DAM & WETLAND TRAIL BIRD SURVEY

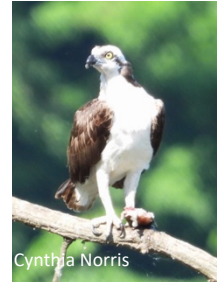


The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) asked Canton Audubon to perform a bird survey near the Clendening Lake dam at the newly completed wetland trail loop. CAS member, Chuck McClagherty, organized the survey, scouted the area, and enlisted bird survey volunteers. Collectively, 92 species of birds were observed by nine volunteers at the dam/trail location using eBird for documentation. There were 40 person-hours spent around the dam and wetland

complex between April 13 and May 31 of this year. With migrations and seasonal changes, data will continue to be collected by interested birders at the trail throughout the year. USACE hopes that others will visit and enjoy birding and hiking at the new wetland trail.



Thank you to the USACE who invited us to produce a bird list. And a big thank you to CAS members and friends who participated; Diane Davis, George Goldsworthy, Cynthia Norris, Mary Schilstra, Ken Schilstra, Scott Watkins, Linda Watkins, Scott Pendleton (from Harrison County) and of course, Chuck McClagherty!



CITIZEN SCIENCE—WILD TURKEY & RUFFED GROUSE SURVEY

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is asking for help from birders, hikers, and nature lovers for help with the summer brood survey of Wild Turkeys and Ruffed Grouse. This survey is conducted in July and August when female birds and their young are most active. These surveys are used by wildlife biologists to estimate populations.

When observing turkeys, the number of gobblers, hens, and poults (young turkeys) are reported along with the date and county reported. Ruffed Grouse sexes cannot be differentiated in the field so just the number of adults and young are noted with the date and county. These observations can be reported on the Wildlife Reporting System webpage at wildohio.gov (Scroll down left side menu to Report Wildlife Sightings) or on the HuntFish OH mobile app.

Wild Turkeys are often found in mature or near mature forests but are highly adaptable and can live in areas with as little as 15% forest cover. The preferred feeding areas include a mix of forbs, grasses and insects. The nest is usually found in dense cover near an open area. It is a small depression in the ground and lined with leaves. Grouse inhabit heavily forested areas, occurring in young regenerating forests, especially those under 20 years old. Summer food sources contain ample selections of seeds, catkins, fruits & berries, leaves of herbaceous plants, and insects and other invertebrates. The nest is found on the ground, usually at the base of a tree or boulder, in a deadfall or brush pile, or in a hollow stump, in a stand of trees that is fairly open at ground level.

Turkeys had disappeared from the state by 1904. Reintroductions began in 1956 and continued through 2006; by the time the Second Atlas of Breeding Birds of Ohio was conducted (2006-2011), Wild turkeys were reported in every county in Ohio and are now common through much of the state.

Ruffed Grouse, which were historically found throughout Ohio due to a mix of shrubby fields & woodlots across the state, began to decline in the late 1800's and continue to this day. The first Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas (1982-1987) showed grouse present in 32% of the atlas blocks that were surveyed. The second survey, which was conducted 25 years later, showed only 7.5% of those same blocks occupied by Ruffed Grouse.

Sources: The Louisville Herald, June 30, 2022, Great Outdoors; The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Ohio; Cornell Lab of Ornithology Birds of the World

RECENT EVENTS



➤ **Earth Day** event, April 23, at Kent State Stark was a success! Attendance was good with lots of visitors at our table. We passed out bird and nature literature as well as flower seeds, booklets, activity sheets and buttons for kids. Thanks to Denise Lesko, Jim Massie and Linda Chen for volunteering (pictured left).

➤ **Dover Library program:** In April, Chuck McClagherty presented "The Joy of Birds" to an enthusiastic crowd of 30 people.



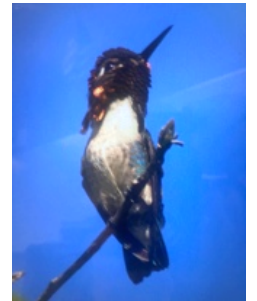
➤ **May CAS program** was a huge hit. Josh Kuszmaul, from Raptor Hallow, showed up with a Sacred Ibis, Red-tailed Hawk and Eurasian Eagle Owl.



➤ **Trinity Brethren Church, Men's Annual Breakfast:** In June, Marlene Bolea presented "Ohio Tweets" which is a program about some of the backyard birds of Ohio. The breakfast is in honor of Father's Day with ten men in attendance. Marlene even brought home a table decoration for her garden!

CHAPTER CHATTER

➤ Byron Berger took a 10-day trip to Cuba in April 2023. He saw 45 new/lifer species, most were endemic, including the Cuban Bee hummingbird which is the world's smallest bird (pictured right). It is 2 ½ inches long and weighs less than a dime. *Photo by Byron*



➤ Denny Lesko spent 9 days in Portugal this past May birding with two friends from New Jersey. They hired guides to take them to ZPE Castro Verde, Alvares and EVOA - Tagus Estuary. They also birded on their own with the help of eBird. The European Roller (pictured left) breeds in Portugal and winters in Africa. *Photo by Denny*

➤ Jon Cefus had a family of Red Foxes spend about a month and a half using a den at the corner of his driveway this past spring. At its peak, there were 8 fox kits and 2 adults. The location provided some pretty great photo ops! *Photo by Jon*



GREAT LAKES PIPING PLOVER UPDATE

By Linda Chen



Photo by Phil Stosberg - Imani (right) chasing a Killdeer on Montrose Beach Dunes, May 2023

It's with great excitement that Imani, a Piping Plover chick born to Monty and Rose in 2021, returned this year to Montrose Beach in Chicago. He was recognized by plover monitors due to his unique leg bands. The Chicago Park District has fenced off the beach area and the "piperazzi" have been out in full force with their binoculars, cameras and spotting scopes. As of June 15, Imani has been confirmed present at Montrose Beach Dunes. Imani means "faith" in Swahili and in 2022, he made a late arrival to Montrose after first stopping in Minnesota, landing days after Monty died.

The Montrose Beach Dunes began spontaneously establishing itself around the year 2000 when local a birder, Leslie Borns, spotted lakeshore rush growing on the beach. She encouraged the Chicago Park District to stop grooming the beaches and the dunes were nurtured and cared for by volunteers and natural resource agencies. The Montrose Beach Dunes Natural Area has since expanded to approximately 16 acres of habitat.

Although anthropomorphizing animals is frowned upon, giving Monty and Rose names and telling their story brought attention to them and their endangered species status to Chicagoans and many others around the county. They have helped raise awareness of the plight of not only Great Lakes Piping Plovers, but of all birds and the importance of appropriate habitat necessary for their survival.

You can follow the plovers on Facebook at Chicago Piping Plovers or at Great Lakes Piping Plover Recovery Effort.

Chicagoreader.com "How One Woman Revived the City's Most Impressive Natural Ecosystem"

wttw.com Chicago TV "Imani Plover Is Back at Montrose. Will Monty and Rose's Chick Stick Around and Find a Mate?"

ABA YOUNG BIRDER OF THE YEAR MENTORING PROGRAM

Every year the American Birding Association offers a mentoring program for young birders 10 to 18 years old. This program pairs adult birding experts with these young birders to offer them help, guidance, advice, and encouragement in 5 modules: Field Notebook, Conservation & Community, Writing, Illustration, and Photography. There are also online groups to post progress, ask for advice and make friends. Participants can enter into as many or as few of the modules as they desire. Participants must be ABA members and there is a fee but scholarships are available. Canton Audubon will also likely help with a scholarship. You can learn more about this program by visiting the ABA website at www.aba.org, click on Programs, then ABA Young Birders.

Registration for the 2024 program begins in July 2023. Register early! Space is limited and registration fills up quickly. This is a great program that is loads of fun and helps improve your birding skills immensely. Canton Audubon Society would love to help a young birder take part in this program. Let that birder be YOU.

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The Newsletter of Canton Audubon Society

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 Scott Watkins, VP - 2023-2025... ph 330-209-1261
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 Barbra Lewis – 2022-2024, 1st term
 Chuck McClagherty - 2022-2024, 2nd term
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 Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison,
 Holmes, Mahoning, Summit & Wayne Counties.*

Canton Audubon Society (Chapter code: S69)

* Chapter Supporter Membership Application

Does not include National Audubon Society Membership

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 - ___ Cardinal (Basic Individual/Family).....\$20
 - ___ Bluebird (Business Supporter, 2 years)..... \$50
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 - ___ Bald Eagle (Life)..... \$300
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