

Marlene Bolea

Audubon *News and Views*

Canton Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society

Established 1962

Sep/Oct/Nov 2024

Autumn

TURKEY VULTURES

By Chris Dyer



Turkey Vulture
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

Like us on Facebook

Phone: 330-209-1261

CAS is a 501(c)3
nonprofit organization

Of all Ohio's breeding species, why look at the Turkey Vulture. It's not colorful, cute, or even rare. What it is though, is unique. So unique, that it's not actually a true vulture. It, along with the Black Vulture, the condors and two other vultures, belong to the Cathartidae family, or New World Vultures. As such, they aren't as closely related to the European vultures as we once believed. Nor are they particularly close to the hawks, eagles and other raptors. Their nearest relatives are actually the storks and cranes!

But, like true vultures, the Turkey Vulture's main source of food is carrion. However, it won't turn its nose/beak up at any easy to find food source such

as eggs, helpless animal babies, and even garbage. Sometimes they will even wade into shallow water to catch smaller fish and crayfish.

Turkey Vultures generally hunt by their sense of smell. They can detect the smell of mercaptan given off by dead and decaying animals up to 8 miles away, according to some sources. Interestingly, gas companies add this same odiferous gas to their product in order to use gathering vultures to pinpoint gas leaks.

As masters of thermals, Turkey Vultures use hot air to soar without expending energy to flap as they sail along hunting for food. It's not uncommon to see large flocks of them circling the sky as they hone in on the exact location of a particular scent. Interestingly Black Vultures, a close relative, lack this strong olfactory sense and instead hunt by watching Turkey Vultures and following them. When the Turkey Vultures locate food, they aggressively chase their larger cousin away from the food and take it. Overall, vultures have one of the strongest digestive systems in the entire animal kingdom allowing them to digest bones, fur, and other items usually considered indigestible. Their digestive system actually creates hydrochloric acid as a digestive juice. Their stomach acid falls on the PH scale 0-1; somewhere near the acidity of battery acid. Between their especially strong immune system and potent digestive acids, vultures can eat diseased and decayed carcasses and remain uninfected by most diseases including botulism, rabies, and even anthrax. Like all Cathartidae members, the Turkey Vulture has a featherless head so that they can
(continued on page 2)

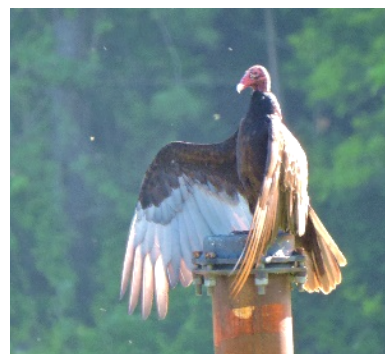
stick it deep into large carcasses to reach the organs within, without fear of getting their feathers matted with blood and ichor, which could impair vision and breed disease.

Despite what a certain city in NE Ohio would like you to think, these large birds do not all return to Ohio together on a specific day. In fact, some will remain year-round in southern Ohio and will generally begin to arrive in northern Ohio earlier than many migrants, showing up as early as February in especially warm winters.

Turkey Vultures are monogamous, generally remaining with the same mate throughout the course of their life. They do not build nests, but rather lay their eggs in dark recesses in ledges, caves, crevices, and hollow logs, as well as on the ground. They also nest in abandoned stick nests of birds, in mammal burrows, and in abandoned buildings. They generally reuse nests from previous years.

Looking somewhat like their ancient relative the dinosaur, Turkey Vultures are an odd sight with their large brown body and smaller, bald, pink head. Despite being an integral part of the ecosystem by ridding the world of excessive decaying material, they are generally considered by many to be unwanted and “creepy;” probably due to their association with death and decay. It is especially unsettling to see them congregate in large groups in a tree or on a building’s roof. Vultures lack a voice box and thus are generally silent but do occasionally grunt or hiss, especially when threatened, which adds to their “creepy” factor.

In addition to being unsettling, they also use some “disturbing” practices that adds to the negative opinion of them many have. Turkey Vultures defend themselves by vomiting their stomach contents at anything they deem threatening and can propel this vomit directly at their foes. The foul smell (if you think a rotting carcass smells bad going down, imagine what it smells like coming back up) is highly effective against most mammals with a heightened olfactory sense. In addition, the vomit is highly acidic and can actually burn and damage skin. Just as gross, the Turkey Vultures use Urohidrosis to help cool off on particularly hot days. This means they defecate on their own legs. The liquid like excrement and urates evaporate from the exposed skin which aids in cooling it off. (I think I would prefer to overheat!).



Turkey Vulture “sunbathing”. This is done to help get rid of parasites or for warming. By Chris Dyer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Holiday Dinner December 4th, 2024: Save the date!** First Christian Church, Market Ave, North Canton. Information & reservation form is on page 7. The Dornans donated all items for the silent auction fundraiser therefore, donations of item from others will not be accepted this year.
- **Hog Island Audubon Camp:** CAS is offering a \$1,000 scholarship for the 2025 camp sessions. See page 5.
- **TWC Enchanted Forest at The Wilderness Center:** October 11 & 12, 2024. Tickets for the general public will be available in the upcoming weeks. Visit <https://wildernesscenter.org>
- **Masthead photo:** This month’s photo was taken by Marlene Bolea.



☞ Canton Audubon member Alice Rini, a long-time and very active chapter member, passed away on July 21 at the age of 96. She was a school teacher by profession and a teacher of nature by heart. She and her beloved husband, Nick, led many CAS outings where they shared their extensive knowledge of the out-doors. Alice's particular passion was wild flowers and there was always a special joy going with her on a spring hike in the woods. While in her later years she was no longer able to be an active CAS member, she never missed a holiday dinner. Alice was also an active & long-time member of the Quail Hollow Volunteer Association and Herbal Society. As a young teenager, she worked for the Stewart family, original owners of Quail Hollow. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her. Alice, may heaven be filled with Dutchman's Breeches and Bleeding Hearts.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

🍷 Refreshments will return September 2024! 🍷

September 18th at 7pm

“Reflecting on Challenges and Solutions for Preventing Bird-Window Collisions in Residential Landscaping” by Lucy McKernan

Roughly half of avian mortality, caused by window collisions, occurs at residential properties. This program provides the latest data from top bird conservationists, including why populations cannot rebound from this threat. Lucy will address the challenges of retrofitting windows and other reflective building materials on the bird walk and during the program. There will be a short presentation by our Fritz Scholarship winner, Olufemi Akinnifesi.

Meeting in-person & Zoom. Pre-meeting bird walk at 5:30pm, meet at EG south-facing balcony.



October 16th at 7pm

“A Lifetime of Joy and Wonder Exploring the Bobolink Area” by Kent Miller

The Bobolink Area is a 12-county area in East Central Ohio centered around Wayne & Holmes with nine of the twelve counties touching Lake Erie or Pennsylvania. This presentation documents Kent’s adventure exploring these counties for one year, surveying birds, butterflies, dragonflies, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and more. He began birding as a toddler and in 2011, he branched-out to all other flying and crawling things. Kent is a pastor at Dayspring Christian Fellowship Church, Jackson Twp/Massillon.

Meeting in-person & Zoom. Pre-meeting bird walk at 5:30pm, meet at EG south-facing balcony.



November 20th at 7pm

“Ohio Owls” by Linda Watkins

Explore the world of Ohio’s native owls, learn intriguing facts about them. Linda will discuss the ups & downs of caring for these amazing birds and the rehabilitation of them. She has worked as a Wildlife Rehabilitation Specialist for nearly 20 years at Stark County Park District’s Wildlife Conservation Center. Her primary field is birds and she has developed rehab diets and training protocols for them. Linda also mentors new volunteers in bird care at the center. A program bonus – the audience will meet Ambassador Owls! Meeting in-person & Zoom.



December 4th Holiday Dinner

“I Only Bird While I’m Awake” by Gary Gerrone

Listen to humorous tales of learning, seeking, finding, identifying, and enjoying birds...and how birds made Gary a better Naturalist...and a better person. He served as the award-winning naturalist supervisor for most of his 30-plus years with the Lorain County Metro Parks, and currently manages both Geneva and Headlands State Parks. His writing resume includes nearly 400 published pieces including his long-running nature column and the authoring of the book “Lorain County Metro Parks: The First Fifty Years.”

CAS 1ST SATURDAY BIRD & NATURE WALKS

September 7 th , 2024 Saturday at 9:00am	Mahoning Valley Trail, meet at the parking area at 182 E. Gaskill St., Alliance, OH 44601. Binoculars are available.
October 5 th , 2024 Saturday at 9:00am	Fry Family Park, 2533 Farber St. SE, Magnolia, OH 44643. Meet at the visitor’s center. Binoculars are available.
November 2 nd , 2024 Saturday at 9:00am	Deer Creek Reservoir, meet at 14514 Price St. NE, Alliance, OH 44601. Binoculars are available.
December 7 th , 2024 Saturday at 9:00am	Tow Path Trail – Lake Ave. Trailhead near Ernie’s Bike Shop. 135 Lake Ave. NW, Massillon, OH. Binoculars are available.

2ND ANNUAL STARK COUNTY BIRD QUEST

4pm Friday, September 13 through 4pm Saturday, September 14, 2024

The Stark County Bird Quest is a 24-hour fun and friendly “competition” or challenge for all ages and birding skill levels. This family-friendly event is free and includes introductory workshops, information on where to go birding, and guided walks during the event. A celebration at the end of the 24-hour challenge will be our way of bringing teams together for fellowship and to recap the previous 24 hours.

Team sizes can be as few as two people or 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 or Preserves Visited”, “Most Creative Team Name”, and so on.

This is a family-friendly event and all participants must act accordingly. The celebration will be held at Stark Park’s Fry Family Park Visitor’s Center, 2533 Farber St SE, Magnolia, Ohio.

For required registration forms and in-depth information, including Bird Quest Species Checklist and the official flyer, visit: <https://cantonaudubon.org/stark-county-bird-quest>



Guided Walks: Saturday, September 7, 2024 at 9:00am. Join Canton Audubon Society on a bird walk at the Mahoning Valley Trail, Alliance, OH. Meet at the parking area at 182 E. Gaskill St., Alliance, OH. Beginners welcome. Bring binoculars or borrow ours. Contact: cantonaudubonsociety@gmail.com

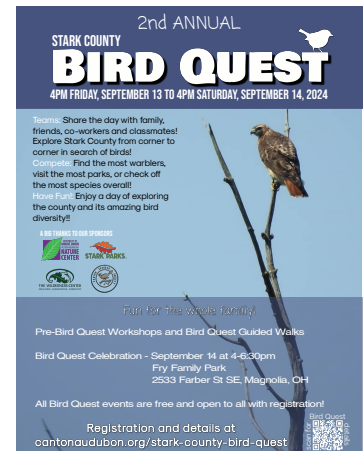
Guided Walks during Bird Quest. RSVP at (330) 823-7487 or naturecenter@mountunion.edu

Friday, September 13, 2024 at 7:00-8:30pm – Quail Hollow Park Evening Bird Hike

We hope to see/hear late-day birds like owls. Dress appropriately for weather conditions and rugged trails. Meet in the lower lot adjacent to the playground. Bring binoculars.

Saturday, September 14, 2024 at 8:00-10:00am – Shorebirds – *location TBD* depending on habitat conditions.

Every fall, thousands of shorebirds migrate through Ohio. The mud flats of nearby reservoirs are great places to observe the birds. Wear appropriate footwear due to mud and water. Bring binoculars.



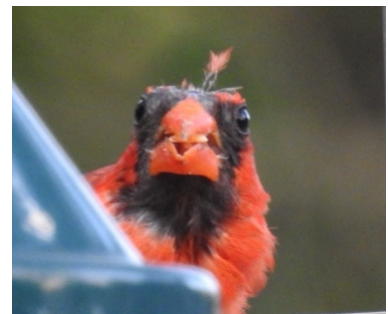
CHAPTER CHATTER



CAS member Jacki Lemmon and Warren birding Magee Marsh.



Warren, a future Auduboner, looking for warblers at Sheldon Marsh.



A bedraggled-looking male Cardinal stopped by Scott Watkins' feeder.

THE ALAN DOLAN HOG ISLAND SCHOLARSHIP



The Canton Audubon Society is pleased to offer a \$1,000.00 scholarship to help cover the cost of attending a 2025 Hog Island Audubon Camp session to encourage interest and study for serious nature lovers. Alan & Lee enjoyed their experience immensely!

The camp is a world class facility for research, education, and conservation as well as an education camp for adults, families & teens. Located on a barrier island off the northern

Maine coast, Hog Island Audubon Camp has a rich history in American Ornithology and is the birthplace of Audubon's Project Puffin. Hog Island is operated by the National Audubon Society under the name [Seabird Institute](#).

All CAS members are eligible to apply as well as Ohio residents living in the CAS the region (Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Mahoning, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas and Wayne Counties).

Those who are interested must fill out an application, tell us why you would like to attend and what you hope to gain from the experience. We also ask that you share that experience with a brief presentation at a CAS program meeting or a small article for the CAS newsletter. The Hog Island website is having an overhaul; 2025 camp sessions will be listed the 1st week of December. Please send applications to CAS by mid-December although they'll be accepted until March if not awarded. hogisland.audubon.org | For questions email: CantonAudubonSociety@gmail.com

AUDUBON GREAT LAKES CHAPTER GATHERING



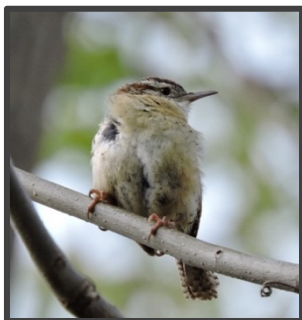
October 18-20, 2024 at The Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education in Gary, IN., near the Indiana Dunes National Park. Event speakers will discuss work with partners to protect shorebirds and coastal wetlands, with break-out discussions, demonstrations, engagement programs, celebrations

of volunteer leadership, and bird walks to experience Indiana Dunes habitat. There will be \$600 scholarship awards to help cover travel and hotel expenses.

Sign up: www.mobilize.us/audubon-great-lakes/event/652213

2024 FRITZ COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

The Canton Audubon Society is pleased to announce that the \$1,000 Arnold Fritz Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to Olufemi Akinnifesi. He is in the 3rd year of his PhD program at Kent State University with a major in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. Olufemi is an aquatic biologist and his PhD research is part of a National Science Foundation grant studying the effect of metals on rivers and streams. The scholarship committee feels he is well-suited and a very deserving recipient of this scholarship. Congratulations!



What animal is this?

How well do we know the animals around us? Hopefully a new regular feature, Chris Dyer is presenting a picture of animals that appear in Ohio. Can you guess the species by the picture? For this month we're starting off with any easy one. Do you know this species?

CAS Business Supporters

Dumont's Seed Company

619 30th St NW, Canton, OH 44709
Ph: 330-492-0204
Bird seed, Feeders, Supplies,
Lawn, Garden

Hartville Elevator

11 Prospect Ave N, Hartville, OH 44632
Ph: 330-872-9320
Birds seed, Feeders and supplies
M-F 8am-5pm, Sat: 8am-noon Sun: closed

Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center

University of Mount Union
1972 Clark Ave. Alliance, OH 44601
Ph: 330-823-7487
T-F: 9am-4pm, Sat 1pm-5pm,
Sun 1pm-5pm, Closed Mon

Little Sparrow Bookshop

1200 N Main St, North Canton, OH 44720
Ph: 330-967-2142
New & used books, Audiobooks, gifts,
Local authors & artists
T, W, F: 11a-6p, Th: 11a-7p,
Sat: 10a-5p, Sun: 12-4p, Closed Mon

Stark County Park District

Administration: 330-477-3552
5300 Tyner St NW, Canton, OH 44708
Exploration Gateway (EG)
5712 12th St NW, Canton, OH 44708
Ph: 330-409-8096 www.StarkParks.com

The Towne Printer

2403 Cleveland Ave Canton, OH 44709
Ph: 330-455-4550
M-F: 10am-4:30pm, Closed S/S
Printing services

The Terra Depot

Megan Shoenfelt
7404 Shepler Church Ave SW
Navarre, OH 44662
Ph: 330-471-6257
Bird Seed, Feeders, Houses, Statuary
www.theTERRAdepot.com
Thu & Fri: 10am-4pm
Sat: 9am-4pm, Sun: 12pm-4pm

REALLY SCARY! BLACK AND YELLOW GARDEN SPIDERS

By Chris Dyer



Female Garden Spider

When I was young and running through the fields of the farmhouse we lived in, one thing always stopped me dead in my tracks; the massive yellow and black spiders that hung in the center of large webs hidden among the grasses. As a kid it felt like they were as big as my head. It was terrifying to come upon one, face to mandibled-face.

That spider was the black and yellow garden spider (*Argiope aurantia*) and if you've ever seen one up close you might understand why running into their webs was such a scary prospect. At maximum size the female can grow up to 1". With its 2-1/2" legs added, it can measure around 6". Males are brown in color and only about 1/4-inch body length.

Perhaps the most conspicuous spider in Ohio, the females build their two-foot diameter webs in open areas, such as gardens and fields, beginning in mid-June and surviving until the first killing frosts of autumn. The female is easily seen with its flashy coloration, resting motionless head-down in the center of her web, while the male is inconspicuous and easily missed. If you find a female during mid-summer, check nearby for one or more small males in webs close by. These suitors compete to mate with her, and the victor guards her from other males.



*Female (left)
next to male*

Garden spiders are a member of the orb spider family, which spin flat, circular webs. The massive web is complicated, using both sticky and non-sticky silk to build. Non-sticky silk is used for "radial threads" which radiate from a central point like spokes on a bicycle wheel and "frame threads" which encircle the outer web. These attach to the support structures, such as plant stalks. The spiral pattern that emanates from the center of the web is sticky silk and helps in capturing prey. The web has a diagnostic zigzag pattern at the bottom half. This extra weave is known as a stabilimentum. Its reflection helps larger animals (like us) see the web to avoid walking through it, but it also may help attract smaller prey by reflecting ultraviolet light. Research has shown that when some *Argiope* spiders and their webs are viewed under ultraviolet light; the spider and its web disappear, but the zigzag stabilimentum stands out boldly; so insects, which see in the ultraviolet spectrum, may be lured to their doom thinking they are visiting a massive flower! Each night, the garden spider will consume its own web and construct a brand-new web each morning.



Web with Stabilimentum

The black and yellow garden spider practices a "wrap-and-bite" strategy to quickly dispatch large prey such as grasshoppers (its favored prey) with minimal risk to the web and its own health. When an insect gets stuck in their webs, its movement attracts the spider, which rushes over to rapidly spin their captive's body with two pairs of legs while simultaneously wrapping them in a thick covering of webs from the spinneret.

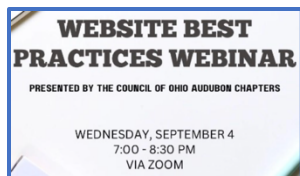
They then deliver venom containing both neurotoxins and necrotoxins via their fanged bite. The neurotoxins paralyze the prey and halt its struggling. Meanwhile, the necrotoxins which are filled with digestive enzymes, begin their work of dissolving the insect's innards. The spider then attaches the thick web-bag containing its victim near the web's center and awaits the necrotoxin to finish working. When ready to eat, they

will jab their chelicerae through the silk and into the insect to "drink" its dissolved insides; much like humans using a straw to drink the milk from the shell of a coconut. They will "eat" just about anything that gets tangled in their sticky webs, including hornets and yellowjackets. (continued on page 7)

After breeding in the fall, the male dies and the female lays her eggs. The egg case is suspended from silk lines in a sturdy bush and can contain up to 1000 eggs. The egg case is about the size of a grape, tan in color and oval-shaped. The young develop in the cocoon and will emerge the following spring and start the cycle again.

All of this may sound a bit like something from a late-night horror movie, but it's not as scary as it seems. Due to the high visibility of their webs and the fact that they don't usually spin webs in pathways, the likelihood of getting bitten by a garden spider remains very slim. If a larger organism does get too close to the web, the female will often bounce up and down to make the web vibrate so they can be more easily seen and avoided. Better yet, garden spiders are not aggressive and aren't generally known to bite humans. However, they will bite if disturbed in their webs or if they feel threatened. While they possess venom to use on their prey, it isn't strong enough to pose serious health threats to humans or pets, except those with distressed immune systems. However, if by some unlikely chance, you do get bitten, symptoms generally include mild swelling with possible redness and discomfort around the bite that lasts a few days. In other words, nothing serious. Garden spider bites are said to be less painful than a wasp or bee sting. All of this means you can breathe a sigh of relief! Remember also, as scary as they might seem, they are valuable cogs in the food chain. It's best to just leave them be. However, if a particular spider is a nuisance, then gently knock the web down with a broom. Most spiders will relocate after their web has been destroyed a few times.

COUNCIL OF OHIO AUDUBON CHAPTERS "BEST PRACTICES" WEBINAR



Wednesday, September 4, at 7:00 PM. This insightful webinar will delve into the latest website best practices for beginners & seasoned professional. The session will provide valuable tips and strategies to enhance your chapter's online presence. Presented by Alexandria Horne, Website & Development instructor, Clark State College.

Click "yes" on the Google Calendar, link below. The Zoom link will be sent afterwards.

<https://calendar.app.google/cTpqmL55X1pHQhxW9>

2024 HOLIDAY DINNER

Yes, it's early to start thinking about our December holiday dinner, but due to the change in the newsletter frequency, we felt that putting reservation forms in the Dec, Jan, Feb issue only would not give members enough time to plan for the dinner or send-in reservations. So, we're making information available now. Save the date!

CAS HOLIDAY DINNER RESERVATIONS, Wednesday, December 4th, 2024

*** Begin to arrive 5:45pm for check-in. Dinner at 6:30pm ***

Location: First Christian Church, 6900 Market Ave N., Canton, Ohio 44721

Attendee Name/s	City Chicken (made w/ pork)	Baked Fish	Vegetarian Lasagna	Cost

TOTAL:

- Meals are **\$19.00 each** which includes sides, salad, roll and dessert with coffee and tea as beverage.
- Send reservations with check to: Canton Audubon Society, PO Box 9586, Canton, Ohio 44711.
- **RESERVATIONS ARE DUE NOV 25.** *Pre-payment is preferred but payment is available at the door.
- The Silent Auction is the only CAS fundraiser. This year, all auction items were donated by the Dornans.
- Email CantonAudubonSociety@gmail.com with questions. Add "Holiday Dinner" in the email subject.



Officers:

Linda Chen, President - 2023-2025
Scott Watkins, VP - 2023-2025... ph 330-209-1261
Myra McCoy, Treasurer - 2023-2025
Connie Rubin, Secretary – 2024-2026

Directors:

Michael Barath - 2024-2026, 1st term
Byron Berger - 2024-2026, 1st term
Marlene Bolea - 2023-2025, 2nd term
Lee Dolan - 2024-2026, 1st term
Dr. Robert Hamilton IV – 2024-2026, 2nd term
Teresa Kaminski- 2023-2025, 1st term
Megan Shoenfelt – 2024-2026, 2nd term

Conservation: Linda Chen

Education: Lee Dolan

Membership: Chuck McClagherty

Newsletter: Chris Dyer, Linda Chen

Programs/Field Trips: Scott Watkins

Public Outreach: Lee Dolan, Chuck McClagherty,
Cynthia Norris, Connie Rubin,

Publicity: Connie Rubin

Scholarship, Fritz (college): Scott Watkins Lee Dolan, Bob

Rohrbaugh, Rose Ann Carper, Dr. Robert Hamilton IV

Scholarship, Alan Dolan Hog Island: Dr. Robert Hamilton IV,

Megan Shoenfelt, Chuck McClagherty,

Social Media: Linda Chen, Chris Lamb

Website: Scott Watkins

The Wilderness Center Trustees:

George Goldsworthy

Chuck McClagherty

*We serve Stark, Tuscarawas, Carroll and parts of
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

____ Song sparrow (Student).....\$10

____ Cardinal (Basic Individual/Family)..... \$20

____ Screech Owl \$50

____ Bluebird (Business Supporter, 2 years)..... \$50

____ Bald Eagle (Life)..... \$300

____ Other (name your amount)..... \$____

____ *Introductory National Audubon Society/...\$20

Canton Audubon Society Joint Membership

Name:_____

Address:_____

City: _____

State:_____ Zip Code:_____

Email:_____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL TO:

Canton Audubon Society

P.O. Box 9586

Canton, Ohio 44711-9586

* OR, PAY ONLINE at www.CantonAudubon.org