

"Promoting the study of wild birds and the conservation of natural resources on Kelleys Island."

HOOT



OWL

Inside...
2004 Upcoming Events
Brown Creeper
Birds to Look For
Membership Application or
Renewal Form

KELLEYS ISLAND AUDUBON CLUB NEWSLETTER FOR

YOU AND ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORS • WINTER 2004

Feathers and Foliage 2004

Lori Hayes

The Kelleys Island Audubon Club's Annual Feathers and Foliage Festival on Sat., Sept. 27 began before dawn when the first of the bird banders mist nets were unfurled. Many members, locals and tourists came out to Long Point to watch the many birds banded and released by Tom Bartlett's assistants. June Campbell and I had a booth nearby selling Audubon note cards, magnets, books and raffle tickets.

At 8:15 am, Kevin Metcalf led a well attended bird walk to the North Pond. Kevin is a Naturalist at the Cleveland Metroparks and has been a long time friend of the Kelleys Island Audubon. Kevin also conducted a Hawk Watch at the Glacial Grooves. Kevin watches for and records the numbers and kinds of raptors crossing Lake Erie over Kelleys Island on their way south. Weather and wind determines if a raptor will cross the lake or take the inland route through Michigan along the Detroit River.

At 1 p.m., our former State Park Ranger, Craig Morton led a Tree and Foliage walk in the State Park. We were glad to have Craig back to visit and help the Kelleys Island Audubon.

Many thanks to all of the Bird banders and volunteers who helped make this event a success.



Tom Bartlett (first male on left) was awarded a meritorious service award from the KI Audubon at the club's final 2003 meeting, along with a 2004 KIAC Nature Calendar. Tom has managed the twice-yearly bird-banding and the monthly bird counts for the KIAC for many years. Thanks Tom!

2003 Season Comes to An End

The 2003 Kelleys Island Audubon season officially wrapped up with our Annual Fall Pot Luck held Sat., Nov. 15 at The Inn.

Tom Bartlett was recognized with an award certificate for the considerable time and effort he contributes conducting the monthly bird census and bi-annual Bird Banding on Kelleys Island. You can view a photo of Tom accepting the award on our website: KelleysIslandNature.com

Everyone enjoyed themselves and no one went home hungry!

President's Message

Snow falling on the cedars in the Scheele Preserve is peaceful. An ice covered Alvar is dynamic. The beaches and rocky shoreline change daily as winter approaches. A thousand mergansers on the water feeding—Wow! Our famous Bufflehead Ducks surround the island. Our nature on Kelleys Island is amazing.

At our last board meeting, a nature book on Kelleys Island was proposed by Delores Cole. We have decided to pursue this. Wildflowers, birds, geology and water. Many of the elements that make our lives and world very unique and special. This book project will take time. The Pape Memorial and Judy DuShane have offered seed money. More money will be needed. We will look for grants and contributions, and volunteers from our membership. Our club prides itself for its diversity. If you want to help, contact me or Delores.

Nature Camp will return in 2004. This is our largest volunteer day of the year. We need around 35 people to make this day safe and fun for the kids. It is hard work but very satisfying. Wed., Aug. 4th is the date to mark. Call Peggy Cooney for details.

I want to thank everyone for being part of Audubon this year. The attendance at our meetings and lectures was impressive. The events we hold always need volunteers and I thank all of you for your time and hard work. 2003 is almost over but Kelleys Island Audubon is ready for 2004. Whether you are riding out to Long Point, walking the beach in Sanibel or just getting your morning paper be sure to look up for eagles.

Pat Hayes

DUES REMINDER—2004 DUES ARE DUE IN JANUARY

Kelleys Island State Park Summer 2003

Sandy Tkach, Naturalist KI State Park

A warm welcome to our new State Park Manager Mike Monnett and His wife Nikki and girls Alex and Regan, newest members of Kelleys Island Audubon.

Here is a word from Nikki, "My family's first summer on Kelleys was amazing to say the least. It was a bit of a culture shock having come from Put-in-Bay, but it was so refreshing to see such a beautiful island with so many family oriented activities. We feel very fortunate to have this opportunity to raise our two daughters amongst the nature and beauty that Kelleys has to offer. Our oldest daughter, Alex is a budding naturalist and scientist who can not get enough of the wildlife that is so abundant in this area, and our youngest, Regan just loves having a yard large enough to run and play in. It really took very little adjustment on all of our parts to settle in and call Kelleys Island "home." Living here so far has truly exceeded our expectations!" Alex tells me she is looking forward to next summer's Audubon Nature Camp.

The installation of the model of the *Adventure* for the

Duke DuShane Memorial was a highlight of the summer. Campers who knew nothing of the rich heritage of the shipwrecks off Kelleys Island have asked many questions and shown much interest in this display. We are fortunate to have such a grand display.

The barn swallows didn't want to share the picnic shelter area this spring so a solution was needed. Mike got us some bird netting to protect the center of the shelter area. Now we have a protected picnic shelter in the park, where we can watch the barn swallows nest around the perimeter of the structure. Nature classes were held at the shelter all summer.

A new swing set has been installed and other playground equipment is to come, thanks to Mike.

Collaboration with Mike on the wildflower garden, at the Butterfly Nature Trail (behind the Historical Museum/Old Stone Church) was a successful project this summer.

Mike and I have initiated another good start on invasive species control. We now are trying to educate the public and ask their help in controlling invasive plants on Kelleys. Here on Kelleys we need to work on **garlic mustard** *Alliaria petiolata* and



Attention Shoreline Property Owners

Do you own shoreline property that is great place for Lake Erie water snakes? Would you like a break on your income taxes? Then consider a conservation easement for your property. The Lake Erie Islands Chapter of the Black Swamp Conservancy (LEIC-BSC) still has money granted from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife (ODNR-DOW) to use for expenses associated with securing donated easements (ex. survey or appraisal costs) on the Lake Erie Islands. The grant is from the state's Wildlife Diversity program. More money could become available through additional grants. Protecting habitat through easements will help meet the targeted number of protected acres the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Lake Erie Water Snake Recovery Plan have set to have the snake removed from the list of federally threatened species.

A conservation easement is a restriction that a landowner can voluntarily place on their property. It is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land conservancy that permanently protects its conservation values. A building envelope can be reserved for future construction within an easement. An easement can be placed on either a portion of a property (ex. Only the shoreline portion) or the entire property. A landowner keeps the title to the property

and there is no public access. An easement can be written for each individual landowner. Any donation of a conservation easement is tax deductible. The easement program sponsored by the ODNR-DOW and LEIC-BSC is to be used to preserve properties with Lake Erie Water Snake habitat either along the shoreline or their hibernation sites. If you have any questions about this program or are interested in participating, please contact us.

In other LEIC-BSC news, we have applied for Clean Ohio grant funds to purchase a wet woodland adjacent to the Kuehnle State Wildlife Area on Middle Bass Island. We sponsored educational programs this year for the Elderhostel program held on South Bass by the Lake Erie Islands Historical Society in May and September and held a Nature Camp at the Bay for kids ages 6-12 in June and August. Unfortunately, the property on the East Point of South Bass Island that we had assisted the township in getting a Great Lakes Coastal Restoration grant to purchase was sold to a developer this fall instead. We were very sorry to see this opportunity to preserve a significant piece of shoreline lost.

Lisa Brohl

Lake Erie Islands Chapter of the Black Swamp Conservancy, P. O. Box 461, Put-in-Bay, Ohio 43456, (419)285-5811 or leic_bsc@thirdplanet.net

common reed grass *phragmites australis*.

In the park a new policy of aggressive control is in effect. An excellent pamphlet, *Fighting Invasive Plants in Ohio* is available at the State Park.

The Beach Party at the state park in August was a lot of fun. Nikki pitched right in and helped with the face painting. We also had sandcastle building and rock painting, and a bonfire. We have had "Star Party's" and Nature Studies and Bird Walks all summer. What a great Summer!

Kelley Island Nature Artists on the WWW

We are adding a new section to www.KelleysIslandNature.com this winter and will be featuring "Island Nature Art" by KIAC members. The new web pages will include a biographical sketch of the artist and contact information along with photos, descriptions and prices of their art work. The KIAC artist will be responsible for all of their own sales transactions.

If your artistic abilities reflect the nature of Kelleys Island either pictorially (in any media) or are made from Kelleys Island nature items, please contact Delores Cole at delorescole@ndtc.com or 440 461-1084 so that you may be included in this new section. What a wonderful way to promote the natural beauty of our island!

Brown Creeper, *Certhia americana*

Submitted by Delores Cole

Dependent upon stands of mature trees, little is known about this uncommon and reclusive little bird. The Brown Creeper is the only small brown bird that forages in such a unique manner-it creeps along trunks and branches like a woodpecker. They blend in quite well and can be difficult to see but you can see them on Kelleys Island throughout the winter months. Listen for a sweet delicate very high pitched song - *see-wee-see-see tee-see*

Description: Brown Creepers are small, long-winged, slender birds with a thin down-curved bill. The males and females are similar in appearance they are brown above, speckled and streaked with white, and rufous on the tail and rump. There is a white line over the eye. The tail is long, pointed and stiffened at the end for use as a prop when climbing. The under parts are white. In flight they show a conspicuous broad buffy band on the wings. No other North American bird displays the combination of mottled plumage, down curved bill and distinctive upward creeping habits.



Photo by Scott Wright

Length: 5-5 ¾ inches, smaller than a sparrow.

Breeding Range: Breeds from Alaska and Canada south to the Great Lakes States and Connecticut; also in the mountains south to Nicaragua; winters over most of its range.

Migration: During fall there is a partial withdrawal from the northern parts of the range, as some Brown Creepers migrate south to winter irregularly throughout the United States. During migration, a wider variety of habitats is used, including city parks and open woods, as long as suitable large trees are available. Brown Creepers often join mixed-species flocks with chickadees, nuthatches, and woodpeckers

Courtship: Males have been observed performing a high-speed display flight among the trees, circling the trunks and weaving in and out of branches, and at times pursuing a potential mate.

Breeding Habitat: Woodland

Nest Location: They build their nests mid-story up towards the top of trees.

Nest Type: A foundation for the nest of twigs and bark is built behind a loosened bark scale and extended up to close the open sides of the shelter so that the twig and bark base forms a crescent shape. On top of the foundation, a cup of finer bark shreds, grasses, feathers, and mosses is placed. The nest is built entirely by the female, although the male may gather material for her to place.

Clutch Size: 5-6 white sparsely flecked with reddish-

Keep Your Eye Out For...

December

Red-breasted merganser, goldeneyes, mallards, American black duck, Canada geese.

January

Swans, geese, bald eagle, northern shrike, mergansers, hawks, owls.

February

Great blue heron, swans, geese, bald eagle, pintails, gyrfalcon, owls.

March

Common loon, grebes, American bittern, brants northern shoveler, merlin, hawks, mergansers, soras, pectoral sandpiper.

April

Yellow-rumped, Nashville, western palm, swamp, black and white, black-throated, worm-eating, hooded, Louisiana, Kentucky, yellow-throated and prairie warblers; white-throated, swamp and song sparrow; hermit thrush; rub-crowned kinglets.

Early May

Yellow-rumped, magnolia, chestnut-sided, Nashville, black and white, and yellow warblers; Swainson's thrushes; ruby-crowned kinglet; white-throated sparrow; blue jay; common yellowthroat; orioles; tanagers, grosbeaks.

Late May

Magnolia, Wilson's, mourning, Canada, and bay-breasted warblers; indigo bunting; cedar waxwing; American redstart; red-eyed vireo.

brown.

Nesting: For two weeks, the female incubates five to six eggs, while being fed by the male. Both sexes feed the fledglings, which (after about two weeks) are able to leave the nest and immediately cling to the bark with their sharp claws.

Length of Incubation: 14-17 days

Diet: The Brown Creeper relies on insects and spiders and their eggs for winter food, with only occasional use of vegetable food such as acorns, beechnuts, corn, or seeds. They will also come to feeders to feed on suet. In the summer they are exclusively insectivorous, finding food by intently examining bark crevices as they repeatedly spiral up tree trunks, and then fly down to the base of another tree to start again. When foraging higher up in trees, they creep along the underside of branches in search of food.

Song: The song is short, consisting of five or six notes, sweet and delicate, and high-pitched. The song might be rendered phonetically as *see-wee-see-see tee-see*.

Cool fact: Brown plumage, streaked and spotted with buff, gray and white perfectly camouflages Brown Creepers against a background of bark. When threatened by a potential predator, they will freeze, often with outspread wings, and remain motionless for several minutes. At such times they can be nearly invisible.

Island Meanderings

Kelley Sanderson

They arrived exactly on time that fair November day. The Buffleheads and Goldeneye ducks, that is. All along the quiet shoreline of the south side, groups of 20-50 of those cute little divers amused us by diving underwater and emerging 30 feet away. We knew there must have been tasty morsels in Lake Erie for their pleasure.

About a week later the female Mergansers began appearing. Not as brightly marked as they are in the spring, there was no doubt that they were back. Where were the male Mergansers? Surely they hadn't stopped to ask directions, and the males arrived a week later. The Mergs and Buffleheads gather in large flocks and hang around the islands and Sandusky Bay to feed and fatten up for their migration on further south. By the time they leave the island area there will have gathered hundreds of thousands of these lovely birds. They take to the air in noisy flapping rushes

True to the calendar, the winds of November also arrived on time, about the 10-15th of the month. The strong southwest blows lasted several days. Water depth seemed to evaporate overnight, and one morning all the docks along the south shore line were sitting high and dry. Usually lurking a foot or two under water, the "Elfers Rock" was totally exposed. Buffalo and Erie must have had especially high water, since the SW winds blew all our water to the east end of the lake.

We were a bit early on our way to church last Sunday, so we took a ride up to the North Bay to see what ducks were there. Dots of ducks were spread out all over the bay. Binoculars began to identify the species, Buffleheads, Goldeneyes, Blacks, a couple of Grebes and Loons. It's not unusual to spot a solitary loon here and there around the island during both spring and fall migrations. But as we scanned the crowd in the North Bay, much to our amazement, over 20 Loons were there at one time! Twenty some, we counted again.

What a thrill! We were so fascinated that we were late for church. Oh, well, and we decided we didn't need church today, feeling closer to God at the lake than anywhere else on earth.

Excited by our find at the North Bay, we drove over to the south shore and looked for more ducks. Not much was there because the water was rougher. Suddenly there appeared a

flock of about 30 right near the shore. We stopped behind the brush along the road and trained the binoculars on the ducks. What an unusual flock - Buffleheads and Redheads. As we watched they bobbed on the waves but didn't swim away like they usually do. In fact, they usually aren't that close to shore. Then I noticed that the markings on the Buffleheads were a little too distinct. Then came the realization that this was a flock of decoys! They worked, because they fooled us for a few minutes. And foolish we felt!

Later that afternoon we strolled through the woods from Woodford Road into the East Quarry. What a banner year for fruit! Some areas of the woods looked frosted with all the white berries on the dogwood bushes. The tall cedars were covered with a blue frost from their berries. A few apple trees still survive as remnants from long-ago farms, and they carried a heavy crop of gnarled fruit. The birds of the winter should eat well this year.

If you missed the last Audubon event of the season, the potluck at The Inn, you missed a lovely party with the usual delicious food and delightful company. Tom Bartlett told about finally netting and banding a Sawwhet Owl at the Scheele Preserve, and Pat had pictures to prove it. Jack Wade brought old videos of Kelleys Island, some 15 years old, which were fun to watch. Things had changed very little - same events, same people. Only the color of the boats were different.

Our feeders aren't very busy yet, especially on very windy days. The now greenish-brown Goldfinches, Chickadees and LBJs (little brown jobbies) are occasional visitors. Nut-hatches, once in while a Brown creeper, and Downy woodpeckers work up and down the tree trunks. There is still plenty of food in the woods - berries and nuts. The birds will visit us more often when it gets

colder and the food supply diminishes.

We will watch for the folks here to do the Christmas Bird Count and keep our daily journal of feeder visitors all winter. But mostly we will enjoy the wonderful quiet and solace of winter and those peaceful walks in the woods on beautiful Kelleys Island. What a lovely place to be!



East and south shoreline property grew extensively after the mid-November storm. Photo by Judy DuShane.



Peg Cooney was the highest bidder for our donated painting from Mary Ann Clady. This beautiful watercolor will hang in Peg's island home

OF NOTE...

Climate Change May Endanger Monarch Butterflies

From the Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune—November 11 — Monarch butterflies, which travel hundreds (thousands) of miles to spend winters in Mexico, may be endangered within 50 years because a changing climate could make their winter refuge too wet and cool, according to a new study. (CNN, ScientificAmerican.com)

KELLEYS ISLAND—2004
NATURE EVENTS

Kelleys Island Audubon Club
Potlucks, Meetings and
Programs

- March 18** - Meeting/Potluck—Campbell Cottage
- April 15**—Meeting/Potluck—St. Michael's
- April 23, 24, 25**—Wing Watch
- May 9-14**—Nest with the Birds June 19—Saturday—3rd Annual KIAC Summer Picnic
- July 15, Aug. 16, Sept. 16, Oct. 21**—Monthly Meetings/Potluck—Speakers
- July 17**—Fourth of July Butterfly Count
- Aug. 4**—KIAC Junior Nature Camp
- Aug. 29**—Coastweeks Hike
- Sept. 11**—Butterfly Festival
- Sept. 18**—Kayak Poker Paddle
- Sept. 25**—KIAC Fall Feathers & Foliage Festival
- Nov. 20, Saturday**—Annual Fall Potluck at the Inn

Potlucks are held at 6 p.m., with meeting following at 7.

The July, August and September meetings will be held at the Pavilion on Addison, and the October meeting will most likely be held at St. Michael's Church Hall. The November meeting will held at Pat and Lori Hayes' home, The Inn.

You do not need to be a member of the KI Audubon Club to attend meetings. Join us for the camaraderie and information on Kelleys' natural habitat.

We Can't Do It Without You...

Many Thanks to Our Generous Donors of 2003!

Pape Memorial Fund

- Lee & Sandra Tkach
- Mrs. Charles Herndon
- The Coleman's
- The Von Benken's
- Jean Caudill

DuShane Memorial Fund

- Lee & Sandra Tkach
- Mrs. Charles Herndon

Nest With the Birds

- The Stahl's
- Delores Cole
- Judy DuShane
- Mo S. Miller

Navorska Memorial

- Pat & Peggy Cooney
- Mrs. Charles Herndon
- Lydia Bechtel
- Guy Denny

- Annalee
- John Katko

Judy Weintraub Memorial

- Bob Luckay
- Pat & Lori Hayes
- Janice Bertsch
- Anne Sennish
- Elliott & Gail Warshaw
- Delores Cole
- Judy DuShane
- Jacque Kranyak
- Bill & June Campbell
- John & Jean Kuyoth
- Skip & Sue Schmidt & Family
- Pat & Peggy Cooney
- Thomas Steckel
- Bill Clapper Memorial**
- Jacque Kranyak
- Bill & June Campbell

Kelleys Island Audubon Club is a registered 501 (C)3 and contributions to it are tax deductible.

Nature Book Project

With all the "natural beauty" on Kelleys Island we have decided to start out in 2004 by focusing some of our efforts over the next couple of years on developing a full color Kelleys Island nature book.

It will describe and depict all the wonderful things we see around us all the time throughout the seasons such as the birds, dragonflies, mushrooms, fossils, and much more.

If you have a special topic of nature you think should be in the book, information relating to its place on Kelleys Island, or if you have some nature photos or sketches that are suitable for publishing, please e-mail or call Delores Cole at delorescole@ndtc.com or 440 461-1084.

If you are interested in financially supporting this effort, your tax deductible donations are appreciated too. Make sure you indicate that they are earmarked for the Nature Book Project.

Did You Know About Clam Casts?



bottom by extending, their muscular foot as they open these valves.

Their shells are a form of calcium carbonate (calcite-aragonite) which is fragile; and they are rarely preserved in the Devonian limestone. However, the valves often fill with sediment after the animal has decomposed, and a cast of the shell is preserved after the original shell has disintegrated. Such a cast is referred to as a "steinkern" and can be easily recognized as a fossil clam.

Source: A Glacial Grooves Fossil Walk pamphlet sold at the State Park for \$.35

These were spotted by Gretchen Larson and her grandson on the east shoreline this fall. Delores Cole took the picture.

PELECYPODA (clams or bivalves)
 Enclosed in two valves of equal size and shape, clams move about on the mud end sand of the sea bot-

**Kelleys Island—Christmas Bird Count
12/16/2002**

To help you know what to look for out there on the island, these are the bird species that were spotted on Kelleys Island last year at this time.

| | | | | | |
|------|--------------------------|-----|-------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 2 | Common Loon | 3 | Red-tailed Hawk | | |
| 2 | Horned Grebe | 1 | American Kestrel | | |
| 5 | Double-crested Cormorant | 1 | Killdeer | 7 | American Crow |
| 1 | Great Blue Heron | 2 | Purple Sandpiper | 458 | European Starling |
| 17 | Tundra Swan | 370 | Ring-billed Gull | 14 | Yellow-rumped Warbler |
| 3 | Snow Goose | 32 | Great Black-backed Gull | 38 | American Tree Sparrow |
| 77 | Canada Goose | 1 | Iceland Gull | 9 | Song Sparrow |
| 6 | Gadwall | 334 | Herring Gull | 1 | Swamp Sparrow |
| 176 | Mallard | 18 | Bonaparte's Gull | 6 | White-throated Sparrow |
| 44 | American Black Duck | 24 | Mourning Dove | 6 | |
| 1 | Redhead | 2 | Belted Kingfisher | 15 | Dark-eyed Junco |
| 2 | Ring-necked Duck | 1 | Red-bellied Woodpecker | 3 | Lapland Longspur |
| 3 | Greater Scaup | 17 | Downy Woodpecker | 47 | Northern Cardinal |
| 28 | Lesser Scaup | 23 | Northern Flicker | 28 | Red-winged Blackbird |
| 1 | Black Scoter | 1 | Golden-crowned Kinglet | 2 | Common Grackle |
| 496 | Common Goldeneye | 1 | Carolina Wren | 9 | Purple Finch |
| 981 | Bufflehead | 8 | Hermit Thrush | 43 | House Finch |
| 8 | Hooded Merganser | 4 | American Robin | 3 | Pine Siskin |
| 2270 | Red-breasted Merganser | 63 | Black-capped Chickadee | 9 | American Goldfinch |
| 330 | Common Merganser | 65 | Brown Creeper | 27 | House Sparrow |
| 2 | Bald Eagle | 3 | Blue Jay | 6151 | Total |
| 1 | Sharp-shinned Hawk | 3 | | 60 | Species |

Kelleys Island Audubon Club
P.O. Box 42
Kelleys Island, OH 43438
www.kelleysislandnature.com
Board Members
Pat Hayes
 President
Peggy Cooney
 Vice President
June Campbell
 Secretary
Jean Kuyoth
 Treasurer
Lloyd Burns
Delores Cole
Judy DuShane
Lori Hayes
Jacque Kranyak
Sandy Tkach

REMINDER:

As a 501(C)(3), the KIAC is a registered charity, therefore, all gifts and donations to it are tax deductible.