

BLACK SWAMP BIRD OBSERVATORY



BSBO NEWS

SPRING 2020

Or visit us online at...



Black-and-white Warbler by Nate Koszycki

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Teaming Research

With Education

To Promote

Bird Conservation



*OYBC Conference Field Trip by
Jamie Cunningham*

Black Swamp Bird Observatory

*Teaming Research with
Education to Promote
Bird Conservation*

13551 W. State Rt. 2
Oak Harbor, OH 43449
419-898-4070
www.bsbo.org

Staff Members

Kimberly Kaufman
Executive Director

Jasmine Cupp
Chief Operating Officer

Mark Shieldcastle
Research Director

Laura Guerard
Education Director

Jason Guerard
Outreach Director

Ashli Gorbet
Banding Projects Manager

Ryan Jacob
Staff Ornithologist

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PERCH

Dear Friends:

It was with the heaviest of hearts that we shared the news that the 2020 Biggest Week In American Birding had been cancelled. We've known in our minds what we must do. But our hearts were having a hard time letting go.

With the potential of the impacts of COVID-19 likely to stretch on for many weeks, even if the all-clear is given soon, at this point the BSBO team does not feel confident that we could deliver the kind of quality experience that has become the signature of The Biggest Week. And while birds and birding are important to all of us, protecting people is paramount.

We are immensely grateful to all of the volunteers, partners, speakers, and sponsors who put so much into preparations for the event this year. Part of the difficulty in accepting the inevitable was the painful process of sharing this news with them first.

We're not sure anyone can fully understand the weight of the magnitude of this decision and its impact to thousands of people, to the NW Ohio business community, and to the Black Swamp Bird Observatory mission. Our staff is heartbroken. It's as if we spent an entire year creating a masterpiece that we're now unable to share with people. But share it we will! With all the work that's been done for this year, we will be so far ahead of the game next year that there's no doubt that the 2021 Biggest Week In American Birding will be the BEST EVER! So mark your calendars NOW for May 7-16, 2021 and join us for the 2021 Biggest Week In American Birding and the most amazing migration celebration of all time!

THE FUTURE: ONWARD BLACK SWAMP BIRD OBSERVATORY

We are all adapting our lives to protect ourselves AND to protect others. BSBO is adapting, too. Our staff is working from home, and in addition to postponing the Biggest Week until 2021, we've suspended our spring songbird research operation, and our nature store is closed indefinitely.

THE BIRDS NEED BSBO - AND BSBO NEEDS YOU

With the cancellation of the festival, the financial loss to BSBO this spring will be significant. Our organization manages support very wisely, and while we do have reserve funds to continue operating in a limited capacity for several months, your support is more important to us than ever before.

**Donate \$25 or more before May 1 and you'll be entered to win
our amazing Birding Optics Prize Package valued at more than \$6,000.
We'll announce the lucky winner on May 8, 2020.**

We understand that these are difficult financial times, but if you have the ability to invest in BSBO's mission, we give you our word that we will continue to do all the great things we do for birds with your support. To make a donation visit [BSBO.ORG/DONATE](https://www.bsbo.org/donate)

Please be safe, be well, and thank you for believing in us.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Kaufman
Executive Director

BIGGEST WEEK IN AMERICAN BIRDING

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*In Northwest Ohio,
The Warbler Capital of the World*

Looking ahead to...

MAY 7-16, 2021

Even while we're all trying to remain as isolated as possible, people have come together to support Black Swamp Bird Observatory! Our hardest working and most dedicated volunteers didn't bat an eye when we told them we were cancelling the Biggest Week, they simply said they'd be ready to rock for 2021! (We love and appreciate all of you so much!) And words will fail to convey the overwhelming gratitude we feel for the following sponsors who, upon receiving the news that the festival would have to be cancelled, said KEEP OUR SPONSORSHIP MONEY and use it to sustain BSBO's mission.

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER LEVEL SPONSORS



BAY-BREASTED WARBLER LEVEL SPONSORS



BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER LEVEL SPONSORS



MAGNOLIA WARBLER LEVEL SPONSORS



YELLOW WARBLER LEVEL SPONSORS



GROUPS COME TOGETHER TO SUPPORT BSBO!

Since we shared the heartbreaking news that the 2020 Biggest Week was cancelled, SO MANY WONDERFUL PEOPLE have asked if they could purchase some sort of 2020 Biggest Week Tribute t-shirt.

As of today, the answer is a resounding YES!!

The extraordinarily talented team of Paul Riss & Rachel Riordan at PRBY apparel has designed a fabulous t-shirt that manages to capture birder pride, a spirit of unity in a time of isolation, and the love we all share for the Biggest Week. And to help recover from the financial loss of cancelling the festival, 100% of the proceeds will benefit Black Swamp Bird Observatory to allow us to come back stronger than ever in 2021!

Available in sizes small through 5XL and in one bold blue color to add to the sense of unity.



Here's the link to order yours TODAY! <https://www.startfamous.com/bsbo>



The Rogue Birders have been part of The Biggest Week in one way or another since 2013. Whether simply as participants in the early days, to being volunteer tour leaders and drivers for the past 5 years. Together, we have made so many friends and created uncountable memories at the festival. And we have seen SO MANY BIRDS!

The cancellation of #BWIB2020 affects so much more than our birding plans for spring. The planning, preparation, vendors, sponsors, BSBO staff, and all of the volunteers are greatly affected. The amount of money that will be lost by the communities in Northwest Ohio is staggering. And finally, the funding that BSBO needs to do all of the amazing conservation work that they are best known for has been

catastrophically diminished.

The Rogue Birders felt they needed to do something to try to help BSBO during this crisis. Working with Bruce Miller of the Ohio Ornithological Society (OOS) and Rob Ripma of Sabrewing Nature Tours, they have put together this BSBO Shirt fundraiser. All proceeds from the shirts and sweatshirts will be donated to Black Swamp Bird Observatory via the OOS! You can help, too! Buy a shirt for yourself, a friend, a neighbor, or a complete stranger! Or buy 2 - or 10! You can also donate on the page and all donations will go to Black Swamp Bird Observatory!

Order yours TODAY! <https://www.bonfire.com/store/roguebirders/>

The BSBO team
is thrilled to introduce
a fun and exciting
new online
education series...



BIRDING AT HOME

Here's how it works.

Each month, the BSBO research and education teams will hide several bird images throughout various websites. Your job as a field assistant is to locate every bird, collect and record several data points, and submit your research for analysis.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THIS MONTH'S HIDDEN BIRDS



Head on over to www.bsbo.org/birding-at-home
to learn more!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Terry Breymaier

To say that Terry Breymaier gives back to his community would be a vast understatement. He has volunteered his time and talents across Lucas, Ottawa, and Erie Counties for many years. That is why we are honoring Terry with the first Volunteer Spotlight of 2020.

Terry has been a staple in helping build Black Swamp Bird Observatory—literally! In 2005-2006 when BSBO moved from downtown Oak Harbor to Magee Marsh, Terry helped work on the new facility so it was ready to house the staff and be open to the public. Terry also oversaw the construction of the BSBO photo blind, which was an Eagle Scout project in 2013. He also had a hand in helping construct the Navarre Banding Station building and boardwalks which are still in use today. He's also been a field trip driver for The Biggest Week In American Birding, and for all these reasons—and many more!—Terry was recognized as a BSBO Volunteer of the Year.

Many more organizations have heaped accolades upon him, including the Kiwanis Frederick Hansen Humanitarian Award, the Exchange Club's Book of Good Deeds Award, and Metroparks Toledo's Oak Tree Award, the Toledo Area Boy Scout Council's Silver Beaver Award, and in 2009 he was selected Person of the Year by the Eastern Maumee Bay Chamber of Commerce.

Terry is a member of the Waite High School's Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame, he has served as President of the East Toledo Club, Oregonians, Friends of Pearson Metropark, Funeral Directors Association of Northwest Ohio, and Memorial United Church of Christ. Terry has been a member of the Eggleston Meinert & Pavley Funeral Homes since 1965 and has been a licensed funeral director and embalmer for over 40 years. He retired in 2012, however, continues to work occasionally at the funeral home.

One of Terry's greatest memories is being a part of the Pearson North Metropark dedication on August 30, 2009. In 1991-1992, Terry helped establish the Friends of Pearson Park group. Through a lot of hard work and patience, the park changed landownership and was able to be dedicated as a metropark in 2009.

He and his wife Mary have two children, Rob and Meredith, and five grandchildren, Harrison, Vivek, Hamilton, Addison, and Anderson.



SPECIES PROFILE

Name: Northern Shrike, *Lanius borealis*

Banding ALPHA code: NSHR

Identifying characteristics: Brownish to gray body. A narrow black mask. Black wings, with white patch and black tail, with white on outer tail feathers.

Preferred habitat: Nests in northern open spruce woods while it spends winters in open habitats with scattered shrubs and trees.

Song: Repeated, mechanical “kdldi or plid-plid” calls as well as nasal “fay fay”, “reed, reed, reed,” and harsh, dry ‘shraaaa”.

Northwest Ohio migration fact: While you just may see a Northern Shrike in the exposed landscape along the causeway at Magee Marsh, Killdeer Plains, or Sandy Ridge Reservation in winter months, you may also have luck amongst the eastern red cedars at Lakeside Daisy State Nature Preserve or the rare ecosystem at North Shore Alvar Nature Preserve. These limestone plains provide the northern shrike with stunted trees and shrubs along with low pockets of grasslands scattered across the bare limestone cobble and bedrock that hosts its prey.

Cool fact: These killer songbirds must act fast to break the neck and subdue their prey (rodents, small birds, insects, etc.) since they lack much of the muscle strength raptors have for hunting. For this, they have a sharp, hooked bill. Keep an eye on thorny locust trees or barbed wire fence where shrikes are known to hang their prey until they’re ready to consume.

Sources: Sibley, Audubon, ODNR Division of Natural Areas and Preserves.



This species profile was compiled by Black Swamp Bird Observatory member Tyler Brown of Port Clinton, Ohio. If you are interested in submitting a bird species profile, email jasminecupp@bsbo.org.



<< A HUGE Black Swamp Bird Observatory THANK YOU to Ohio Young Birders Club Central Ohio Chapter advisor, Darlene Sillick, OYBC member Stephen Bischoff, his dad, Tim, and Charlie Zepp, for the fabulous new bird feeding station for the BSBO Anna Macke Mikolajczyk Window on Wildlife!

>> A portion of the funds awarded to Black Swamp Bird Observatory by Ohio EPA's Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) were used to achieve the goals of the 2019 Annual Ohio Young Birders Conference.



Responsible Wind Energy

The Conservation Committee has continued its activities in opposing the actions by wind energy developers that rely upon faulty ecological science to justify their site selection for placing their wind turbines. We must reiterate that Black Swamp Bird Observatory is not against renewable energy – we recognize the need for renewable energy in the national and global efforts to eliminate the generation of greenhouse gases, a goal fundamental to the slowing and potential mitigation of climate change. However, we cannot sit back and abide the use of faulty science by developers to exonerate their purely expedient site selection process, where the impact of turbines upon the fragmentation of habitat and survival of avian and bat species is a mere afterthought. We further recognize the fundamental roles played by avian and bat species in the health and sustainability of the ecological web of life, nature as we know it, and so continue to try and sustain their well-being, because in the end it is our own well-being as well that is at stake.

As a case in point, the Icebreaker Wind project would place 6-7 turbines in Lake Erie, directly in the middle of the Central Basin, a designated Globally Important Bird Area. The GIBA designation is not given lightly or without substantiation. It is the wintering grounds for up to 40% of the global population of Red-breasted Mergansers, as well as other waterfowl. It is the migration route where many warblers and other songbirds cross the lake going both North in the spring and South in the fall. It has been shown to be the fall migration route for the Kirtland's Warbler on their return to the wintering grounds in the Bahamas. Yet, the developer, Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDCo), has stated in their "science" that birds don't cross the lake, and propose that they fly around it instead. They conclude that the project poses minimal risk to birds and bats, ignoring that the site is in a GIBA and is trafficked by both birds and bats.

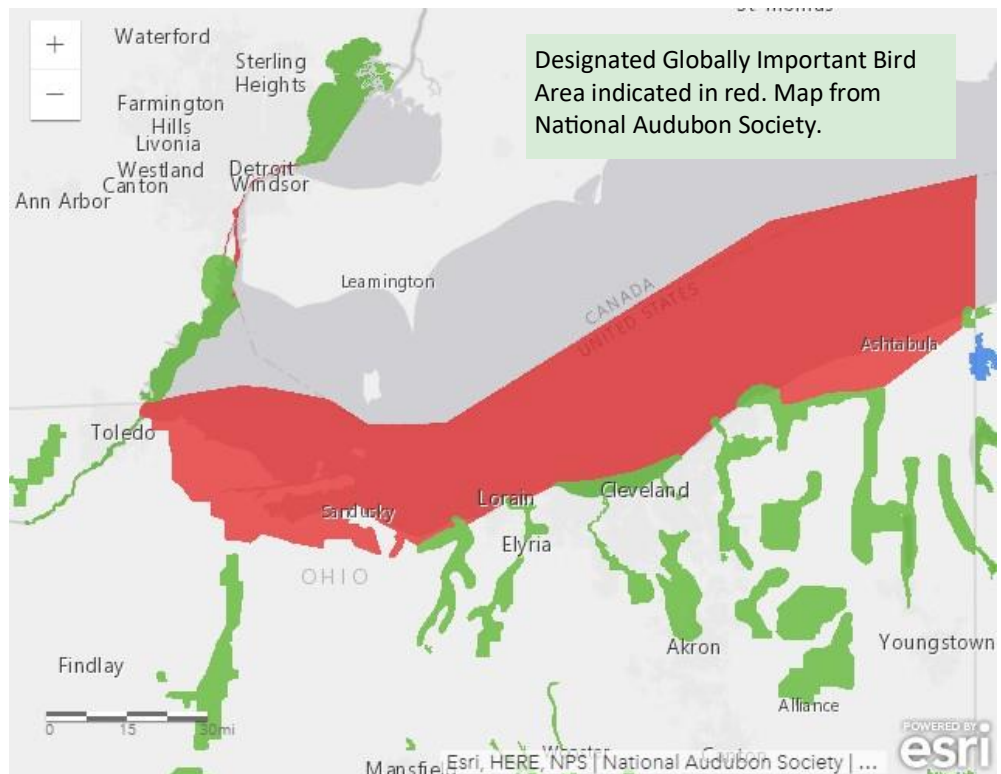
This project was presented before the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) in 2013. At that time the LEEDCo personnel were promoting the project by promising that their vision was to have an additional 1400-1500 turbines on the lake once the initial 6-7 turbines proved it could be done. They promised 800 jobs would result from the build out. Now, eight years later, they deny they have actual plans for such a build out. The project, they say, is "only" a pilot project, as if to say "What harm can 6-7 turbines do?"

With all the above in mind, the current status of the project is that it is finally before the board of the OPSB awaiting a decision on whether to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need, which would grant permission to begin construction when all the conditions and stipulations of their application are met.

There is a wrinkle in the process that did not go unnoticed by BSBO, and our partner in opposition to this project, the American Bird Conservancy (ABC). LEEDCo applied for a Department of Energy (DOE) grant to the tune of \$40 million dollars to sustain the costs of early development work.

In response, The DOE took all the faulty science provided by LEEDCo, doing no ecological work of their own, and wrote an Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA contained the reports and echoed the conclusions of LEEDCo stating that the project proposed minimal risk to birds and bats, in part because, they say, birds don't cross the lake, they go around. The EA was passed on to the Army Corps of Engineers for review and the ACE gave it tacit approval. As a result of this superficial review by both the DOE and the ACE, and because it resulted in the awarding of \$40 million to LEEDCo even before the project has finished review by the OPSB, BSBO and ABC have filed suit against the DOE and the ACE for failing to live up to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA). We ask in the complaint that the DOE require a full Environmental Impact Study (EIS), as we believe is required by the NEPA, and that the granting of funds to LEEDCo be held up until such time as the EIS is completed and reviewed by DOE and ACE.

In short, the science is shoddy, and the developers show no genuine interest in habitat disruption or species mortality. We find it appalling that the position of the Ohio Environmental Council and the Ohio Sierra Club is to support the Icebreaker Wind project, seemingly regardless of the ecological issues. Their position seems to be that climate change mitigation trumps everything, even biodiversity and its sustainability, a position we cannot and will not take. We believe, and indeed hope, that climate change mitigation by developing renewable energy sources can be smarter and more nuanced than that.



Responsible Cat Ownership Program

The Conservation Committee has been working with the village of Oak Harbor to bring about a fully developed program to address the problem of free-roaming cats. Numerous studies indicate that cats are the number one cause of avian mortality, killing billions of birds every year. We also know that the lives of roaming cats are full of disease and danger both to themselves and to the humans around them.

The program began taking form with the passage of a village ordinance making it illegal to feed or foster feral cats. An aftercare program was established whereby captured feral cats were evaluated by a veterinarian and made ready for adoption; or if their health was poor and their survival was in question, they would be euthanized. The first 40 cats were all successfully placed in homes.

BSBO has received a private donation to be used in our effort to change the Ohio Revised Code related to cats as companion animals and expand the existing dog licensing law so that cat ownership is regulated by the same laws as dogs.

We're also working to develop materials that will allow us to promote our Responsible Cat Ownership program to other municipalities and organizations including information packets to be distributed to interested parties which would contain the following: 1) why roaming cats are a danger to birds and humans; 2) a copy of the ordinance; 3) aftercare protocols; 4) testimony and anecdotal evidence of the success of the program.

We have generated interest as far away as California, where others are waiting for a copy of the information packet to show them how to proceed.

We count this as a great success on the Conservation Committee that has been over five years in the making. Our work is becoming a model for others to follow, and all for the benefit of the birds, the cats, and ultimately for ourselves as well.

Black Swamp Bird Observatory's Michael Hutchins Memorial Conservation Fund

Expand. Enhance. Enjoy.

Promoting the cause of bird conservation is at the heart of Black Swamp Bird Observatory's Biggest Week In American Birding. Michael Hutchins Memorial Conservation Fund, formerly known as The Biggest Week Conservation Fund, is used for improving and expanding habitats for birds - something that Michael Hutchins worked hard to do during his time with us.

In 2019, Conservation Funds went towards the Oak Harbor Bird-Safe/Birder-Friendly Community Roaming Cat Program. Domestic cats make wonderful companions when kept indoors or allowed outside only when confined. When allowed to roam, they are nonnative predators that kill billions of birds each year. (Yes, billions with a B.) And outdoor cats often suffer unspeakable living conditions. The more we can work towards a reasonable solution the more it benefits birds, people, and the cats, too!

Future goals are to build this legislation and the capture, assess, and home program into a model for other areas dealing with this serious problem.

The 2017 and 2018 Conservation Fund recipient was Standing Rush. Standing Rush is working on the restoration of over 600 acres of land and water located on the south shore of Sandusky Bay. Standing Rush was founded as a conservation real estate company specializing in the restoration and preservation of ecologically sensitive areas in northwest Ohio.

To learn more about the fund or to donate, visit biggestweekinamericanbirding.com/michael-hutchins-memorial-conservation-fund.



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CONSERVATION EFFORTS AT BSBO.ORG

Project SNOWstorm

What a start to the winter season! First, in late December 2019, a long missing friend reappeared at old haunts just to the north of BSBO. Not heard from since April 2016 during her second invasion to the south, Buckeye, “our” Snowy Owl – originally banded and tagged by BSBO in January 2015 – was recaptured at Detroit Metro Airport (DTW) by wildlife biologist Selena Creed working for the Airport Authority. Still wearing her backpack transmitter – although no longer recording data – Buckeye had become one of the oldest owls on record for Project SNOWstorm. The inoperative transmitter was removed and sent back to the manufacturer with hopes of providing additional data that may be stored in its memory. A flurry of phone calls circulated in an attempt to get a new transmitter outfitted to continue data gathering. Unfortunately a series of events including holidays, cancelled travel, and logistics to get a transmitter to Ohio resulted in her release 50 miles north of the airport; with the hopes that if we were to see her again, we would be ready.

Within days, word came that Selena had captured a second owl. This one – a small male – could be held for a couple of days to allow for a (frantic) shipment of a transmitter and harness to the BSBO team to outfit him with. To make a long (and intense) story short, the owl was transported to BSBO and the team successfully outfitted the bird with his own transmitter. Thus, Wolverine was introduced to the SNOWstorm family. By law, this owl had to be released back in Michigan, so Selena transported him back to the north, miles away from the airport.

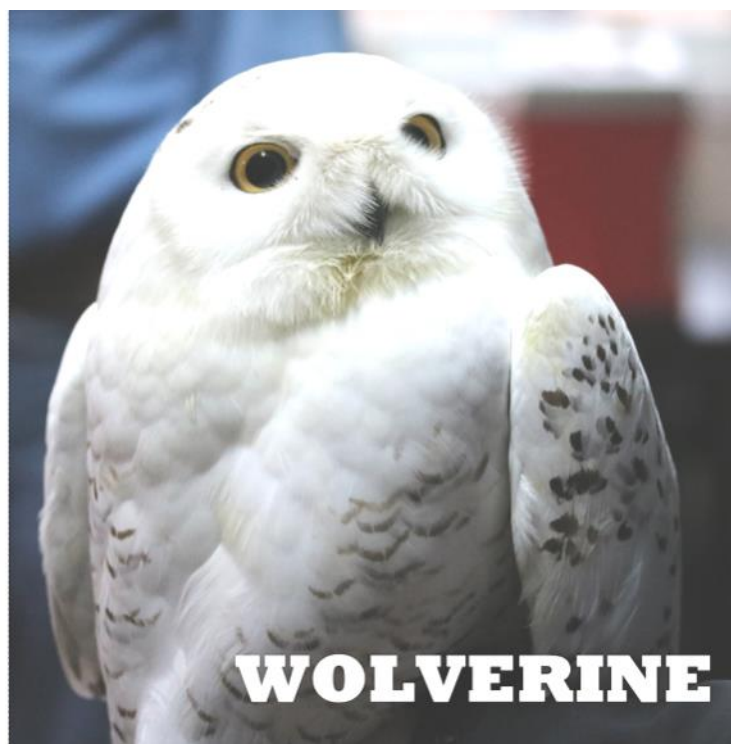
And... Wolverine began his trek back to DTW. He had reached Pontiac to the north of the airport when transmitter signals indicated a problem. There had been no movement for several days near a heavily traveled intersection in town. Selena headed to the site with the worst

conclusions in mind, but found only the transmitter; no bird, no feathers, no harness. The most positive conclusion among many was that somehow Wolverine had succeeded in dismantling the knots holding the transmitter to the harness. Highly unlikely, but not unprecedented. The answer came a few days later when Selena spotted Wolverine back at the airport with the harness still in place. Good news: he was alive. Bad news: he was back at the airport!

So (challenge accepted) the quest to recapture had begun. After all, it was owl 1 and humans 0, and we wanted that harness to hopefully determine the cause of failure. Selena went back to work immediately in January 2020, and quickly captured owl number three. But it wasn't Wolverine; it was Buckeye. She too had returned to the airport. Now, with Wolverine's transmitter in hand, plans were quickly made to get her back to BSBO to implement the original plan with this historic owl. The team assembled and this big owl was returned to the site of her first outfitting in 2015 for a new backpack and with hopes of advancing the knowledge of this magnificent species through a veteran owl with a well-documented past.

This time she was going to be released in the same place as her original tagging, south of the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area in the fields of Ottawa County, Ohio. It worked in 2015; maybe it would work again in 2020 and keep her from DTW. We wonder, does any of this still exist in her memory? These strange creatures being a little “fresh” in handling, this strange thing strapped to her back (which she had just become free of), these Ottawa County fields that were not her choice. We will never know, but her first night's movement was very similar to 2015, with a direct flight west towards the interchange of I-280 and the turnpike and the small Toledo Executive Airport. Did this have significance, or was this just something that resembled the tundra of the arctic?

That is where the similarities to 2015 ended though. This time, Buckeye started up the I-75 corridor and directly to – you guessed it! – DTW.



Through dodged attempts, Selena tried throughout winter to recapture Wolverine. Unfortunately, like so many other Snowy Owls, as winter ended, he receded back to the north in search of the true tundra and a summer nesting location.

Oak Openings Pine Management and Long-term Monitoring Support

Conservation is an important concept for this time on our planet and it is also a core value of what Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) was founded on and continues to champion. However, it is often forgotten that conservation is not a science, but a philosophy. It requires the *support* of sound science, but is a pathway to a desired result.

While the Oak Openings is home to numerous rare and endangered plants and wildlife, considerable habitat alteration has occurred over the past hundred plus years, shaping what we think of as the Oak Openings today. In its early years, hundreds of acres of conifers were planted throughout the preserve under what were considered best management practices at the time. Now, 40-90 years later, many of these introduced stands are collapsing from age, disease, and pest damage.

To address this issue, Metroparks Toledo created an Oak Openings Pine Management Plan and offered BSBO the opportunity in 2019 to gather scientific data on avian response to land management issues. Due to the timing of this offer, BSBO was not able to execute a full-blown study in 2019, but was able to develop a pilot project near the end of the breeding season. General conclusions could be made from the sparse data gathered, but what this pilot project truly revealed was that it would take far more observation and documentation to assess how birds were using the habitats of Oak Openings.

BSBO met with Metroparks Toledo and Katie Ware, a graduate student from Bowling Green State University and avian research technician from BSBO, to develop an in-depth study design to gather detailed information on bird use of the pine stands and neighboring habitats to inform management and development of a long-term monitoring study. This graduate study has the goals of establishing a graduate level project to address avian use and success in the various habitat components identified of interest with pine management in the Oak Openings. A graduate project will provide the personnel dedicated to look at the details needed to address management questions and a long-term monitoring program.

This project should, at minimum, include components of the following:

- Larger sample size for the four strata of Red and White Pine management and control stands
- Address breeding success (nest attempts, success, brood survival) in terms of habitat stand utilization



*Buckeye with transmitter.
Photo by Selena Creed.*

- Acquire time budgets of a sample of breeders, family units, and independent young if possible to address sink/source criteria for breeding birds
- Look at stands in landscape context
- Include vegetative information to use as co-variant in bird use analysis
- Include multiple years of data collection to assess use variability

Results of the 2019 pilot study and information gleaned from Katie's work will be used by BSBO to develop a long-term monitoring program for the entire Oak Openings Preserve Metropark. There will be potential expansion to all properties of Metroparks Toledo to support and evaluate management actions, objectives, and goals of land conservation.

FLY HIGH, BUCKEYE

FROM PROJECTSNOWSTORM.ORG: We've seen some major migration to the north this past week, including one owl that is most of the way to James Bay — but the biggest news is the saddest, because we've lost one of our oldest and most interesting owls.

You'll recall my relief last week that, having survived a winter at Detroit Metro Airport (DTW), Buckeye was migrating north, and had reached southern Ontario just north of Georgian Bay, where she checked in the evening of March 21. My relief was premature; I should have remembered the hard lesson we've learned over the years, that migration is probably the most dangerous period in any bird's life, including a Snowy Owl's.

On March 28, she checked in again — and hadn't moved at all since the previous week. We knew that meant either (best case) a dropped transmitter, or more likely a downed owl. DTW biologist Selena Creed, who had trapped and relocated Buckeye twice this winter, would ordinarily have raced north herself to check, but with coronavirus border closures, that wasn't possible.

Instead, Selena made a lot of hurried connections and was able to reach Ontario provincial conservation office Mitch Turcott — who, despite a lot on his plate, offered to snowshoe back to the remote area from which we were getting Buckeye's signal.

Mitch was able to make the hike yesterday, April 6, and the news was as we'd feared. He found Buckeye's remains, with the intact transmitter; tracks showed that a fox had scavenged the carcass, so there was no way to determine the cause of death, but Officer Turcott said it was in such an out-of-the-way place he doubts humans had anything to do with it.

"I guess knowing she passed during migration of, presumably, natural causes is better than having her get smacked by a plane on her

wintering grounds," Selena emailed Mitch. "Still, it's sad to lose a bird with such a history."

And Buckeye had quite the history. She was first tagged in February 2015 after being relocated from DTW to northwestern Ohio, where Mark Shieldcastle and the staff at Black Swamp Bird Observatory fitted her with a SNOWstorm transmitter. We tracked her for a couple of seasons until the unit failed — and were thus surprised when Selena (with whom we had not previously worked) caught her at the Detroit airport Christmas Eve.

Plans to retag her were scuttled by logistical issues, so Selena moved Buckeye north for release — but she came back, and was caught again New Year's Eve. This time Mark and crew were able to give her a new transmitter, and we were really looking forward to seeing where she went this summer as a mature eight-year-old. It was not to be.

THOUGHTS FROM BSBO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KIMBERLY KAUFMAN...

We're obviously devastated, but we take comfort in the fact that her journey ended in a place so wild, so removed from civilization that it required snowshoes to get to her transmitter. Deep in the wilderness is a fitting final perch for this magnificent bird.

Thank you, Buckeye, for taking us all under your beautiful wings and allowing us to join you on your remarkable journey. It was an honor and a joy to be part of your legacy.





The 13th annual Black Swamp Bird Observatory's Ohio Young Birders conference weekend was complete with friends, nature and, of course, birds!

On Saturday, students presented to a sold-out venue of over 150 participants at the Toledo Zoo & Aquarium's new Promedica Museum of Natural History. Experiences included behind-the-scenes tours and live animal meet & greets with the zoo staff. The Toledo Zoo's Great Hall provided a stunning backdrop for the dynamic and inspirational presentations from today's youth conservation leaders. 100% of the proceeds from the raffle ticket sales during the 13th Annual Ohio Young Birders Conference benefited the OYBC Scholarship Funds! **This year we raised \$1,851!**

On Sunday, the weather was gorgeous and participants enjoyed a guided bird walk and banding demo with BSBO volunteers and staff at Oak Openings Preserve Metropark. The weekend concluded with a private tour of the Cannalee Treehouse Village led by Kelly Milewski, Metroparks Toledo Environmental Education Specialist.

The conference would not be the tremendous success that it is without our sponsors and volunteers.

Lead sponsors included Zeiss, Kaufman Field Guides, and Time & Optics. To see a complete listing of sponsors, visit ohioyoungbirders.org.

Also, a special thank you goes out to these conference volunteers:

**Kenn Kaufman | Tyler Ficker | Kevin Perozeni | Cassidy Ficker
Gautum Apte | Doug Whitman | Amy Downing | Nancy Bogart
| Julie Heitz | Nate Koszycki | Jill Noll | Katie Ware | Pattye
Nicholls | Yvonne Thoma-Patton | Jamie Cunningham | Bev
Walborn | Darlene Sillick**



HELP US HELP THE BIRDS



Jamie Cunningham donated to a fundraiser for Black Swamp Bird Observatory. ...

February 27 at 6:29 PM · Facebook Fundraisers · 🌐



Jamie's Birthday fundraiser for Black Swamp Bird Observatory!!!

Fundraiser for Black Swamp Bird Observatory by Jamie Cunningham

I am asking for donations for Black Swamp Bird Observatory for my birthday! They are such a worthy cause! They f... Continue Reading

\$550 raised of \$500

Ended



Kimberly Kaufman, Kenn Kaufman and 15 others donated.

<< One of the ways you can help Black Swamp Bird Observatory help birds is through a Facebook fundraiser! Facebook fundraisers go through Network for Good, a secure way to transfer funds to non-profits.

Thank you to Jamie Cunningham for dedicating her birthday fundraiser to Black Swamp Bird Observatory!

If you have any questions on Facebook fundraisers, Network for Good, or on how to set up a Facebook fundraiser, contact jasminecupp@bsbo.org or by calling 419-898-4070.



EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES, SOFTWARE

- A passenger van for field trips
- LCD projector HD (1920 x 1080), 40000:1 contrast, 2200 lumens
- Mist nets for our songbird research
- Ink cartridges for our printers
- Bird Food: Sunflower Seeds, Thistle Seeds, Suet Cakes

RETAIL GIFT CARDS

- Staples or OfficeMax
- Lowe's or Home Depot
- Gas Cards for the BSBO Bird Bus

Please call us if you're willing to help with any of these items! 419-898-4070

While shopping with Amazon or at Kroger, please consider donating to BSBO through AmazonSmile or Kroger Community Rewards!

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The fourth annual Birder's Tea was held on Monday, February 17. Members of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory staff had the privilege of attending the event which was organized by Pattye Nicolls, Julie Heitz, and a small army of dedicated women at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Toledo, OH.

Not only was the scenery beautiful, but the attendees made the day even better! Proceeds from the silent auction and raffle at the annual Birder's Tea benefited Black Swamp Bird Observatory's Ohio Young Birders Club. This year, the tea graciously raised \$1,340 that will go towards encouraging, educating, and empowering young people to be great stewards of birds and the environment.

Thank you to all those who attended the tea and volunteered to make it happen!

RIGHT: Althea and EJ eye the beautiful cookies that Pattye Nicolls made for the tea.
BELOW: A group photo of all of the tea attendees (fascinators and all!).



KILLDEER PLAINS FIELD TRIP

Saturday, February 22, was a beautiful day for the annual Black Swamp Bird Observatory field trip to Killdeer Plains in Harpster, Ohio. About 40 people attended the field trip lead by BSBO staff, members of the OSU Ornithology Club, and Ohio Young Birders advisors. No Short-eared Owls were seen, but one of the members of the OSU Ornithology Club spotted a Barred Owl which all groups were able to see.

PHOTOS, TOP LEFT: An owl pellet found in Owl Woods. **TOP RIGHT:** A juvenile Bald Eagle that flew overhead. There were many eagles that were very active in the area. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Ohio Young Birder's Club members surveying one of the ponds at Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Hundreds of waterfowl were seen that day, especially Northern Pintails!



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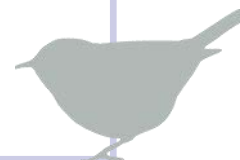
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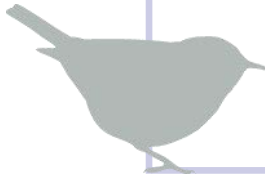
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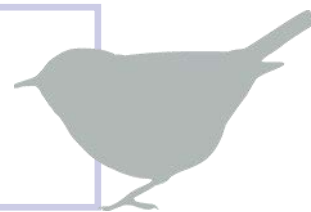
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