

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

Board Meeting Minutes

Monday September 29, 2008, 6 p.m.

Book and Bean in Berea

Present : Stan Searles (Cleveland Metroparks Zoo), Wendy Weirich (Rocky River Nature Center), Diane Sigler, Kathleen Tiburzi, Kit Birch, Liz Clingman, Nancy Howell, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Penny O'Connor

1. Contacts with Emerald Necklace Inn : WCAS consulted on attracting birds to the Inn grounds at the west end of the Lorain Road Bridge. The setting on the edge of the Rocky River provides plenty of natural space for birds. On a visit to Wild Birds Unlimited, we picked out a finch feeder and an all-purpose "Dinner Bell" feeder, plus thistle seed, Supreme Mix and a peanut-butter suet-mix to spread on a board or tree. Innkeeper Gloria Cipri reports that the birds have discovered the feeders.

2. Finances (Nancy Howell)

Treasury has \$14,841.82 as of end of FY 2007-2008. Tom Romito and Nancy are preparing the financial report to Audubon Ohio. Audubon Ohio will send "safety net" financial support to the chapter when the report is in. Stan Searles suggested creating funds within the budget reflecting operations, conservation, Important Bird Area (IBA), etc. Audubon does not require this breakdown. Tom has submitted a grant request to Freshwater Futures for support of the IBA project. Other grant proposals will follow. Stan suggested possible avenues of support from Cleveland Metroparks.

3. IBA Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.

The date is Thursday, October 16, 2008. Dinner is at 6 p.m. Board members should arrive by 5 to set up. WCAS will supply turkey and ham. Diane Sigler will take care of centerpieces. We will have a free raffle of centerpieces. Tom Romito and Terri Martincic will speak. Diane and Mary Anne are preparing slides. Hope to have some analysis of three years of data from Terry Robison.

4. Dike 14 Open house

Penny O'Connor represented Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society with Jim Hamilton and Page Stephens. Estimated 100-200 people came by the table. Mostly adults, some children. Visitors came from Akron, Columbus and Erie as well as from the Cleveland Area. For the next open house, we hope to be in a spot closer the entrance with a clearer view for birding. WCAS has a field trip at Dike 14 on Sunday, October 5, 2008. After the trip, Mary Anne Romito will send a report to Dike 14 EEC with numbers of attendees and photos of the event.

5. Lessons learned from IBA Ultrawalk May 2008

For next year, Date will be Saturday, May 23, 2009. Nancy Howell suggested, and it was agreed that we promote the 31-mile walk and the 5-mile walk only. May include a birding component. Diane noted that we need to have volunteers with a welcome table and signs at the Park Ops site to welcome the 5-milers. Perhaps have music or other events during the hour before 31-milers are expected to arrive. Need to have restrooms open.

Promoting the IBA: As well as service clubs, we could include presentations to assisted living and senior centers. Tom Romito would like to have some others join in making presentations.

6. Annual appeal letter.

WCAS made \$500. profit from last year's mailing. For this year, we may seek a corporate sponsor to support mailing. Tom will seek supporters in the Rocky River Watershed area. Diane Sigler will contact Rocky River mayor Pamela Bobst for suggestions.

7. WCAS bird check list

Mary Anne and Penny are working on this. It would be a good handout at field trips and meetings, a branding item. Will present draft to board when it is ready.

8. Christmas potluck

The date is Tuesday, December 2, 2008. Dinner and Auction will be at 6:30, program at 7:30 p.m. WCAS will supply turkey and ham. We will have a silent auction, and items are already coming in. The program will be from Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

9. Combined Federal Campaign agency fair 10/27/08

WCAS has received funds in past years. We can staff a table at the CFC fair 10/27, downtown. Seeking volunteers.

10. Leap Frog Day at the Zoo, Saturday October 4, 1008

Mary Anne offered passes to the event celebrating the success of amphibian preservation efforts in Northeast Ohio.

11. Coffee Pre-Ordering

Kit Birch proposed having people pre-order shade-grown coffee so that we do not over-buy any variety. We will try this at the next meeting. Kit will have a reward for people who pre-order.

12. Ideas for November Newsletter

Kit's deadline for the November newsletter will be October 15, 2008. We will need details of Field trips for November, December and January. Lead article will be the Christmas Bird Count. We will also feature an article on voting with conservation in mind. Mary Anne will write an article about cliff swallows in the Rocky River Important Bird Area.

13. Northeast Ohio Native Plant Society

Nancy Howell noted that they have a \$500 grant available. Possible areas of support would be weeding, plantings, Native Plants Brochure. Will ask Terri Martincic about the status of reprint of the Native Plants Brochure.

14. Wind Turbines at Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds

Cuyahoga County Planning Commission will hold a hearing Wednesday, October 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Middleburg Hts. City Hall. Tom Romito will try to attend. Possible role for WCAS: to study the impact on birds.

15. Berea Arts Festival during August

Nancy Howell suggested that Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society look into a table next year.

16. Western Reserve Land Conservancy and Hinckley Property Survey

Western Cuyahoga Audubon will walk the property to survey birds. Mary Anne Romito is setting up some dates, at least one session per quarter.

17. Next meeting will be Monday October 20, 2008 at Book and Bean.

--Penny O'Connor
WCAS Secretary