

## MINUTES OF WCAS BOARD MEETING OF MARCH 2, 2004

The board of the Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society met at the Rocky River Nature Center before the regular monthly meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to finish the planning and discussions started at last month's board meeting, and to hear news from Casey Tucker, who has recently joined Audubon Ohio as its Audubon At Home Educator. In attendance were Tom and Mary Anne Romito, Andrew Hohenbrink, Nancy Howell, Terri Martincic, Trish Faehnrich, Casey Tucker, and Kit Birch.

1. Tom opened the meeting by welcoming our visitor, Casey Tucker. He then brought up the issue from last week of how to conduct advocacy campaigns with the help and training of Audubon Ohio. Tom said he contacted the Greater Cleveland, the Black River, the Firelands and the Black Brook Audubon chapters to see if they would be interested in joining WCAS in these types of activities. The responses were not very positive, they all seem to have other projects going. Tom called Jerry Tinianow and passed on these responses. Jerry said he was glad to get this information, and is planning to visit these chapters to drum up support for this initiative soon. Tom is thinking of suggesting a "train the trainer" type of program to get information down to the grassroots level. These people would have to be able to talk in front of groups of people to pass on their training.
2. Tom next brought up the annual picnic. It was agreed that Horseshoe Pond would be a good half-way point between Cleveland and Akron to entice the Akron Audubon chapter to attend so we can get to know each other. Horseshoe Pond is located in CVNP near Rt. 303 and I 77. Sunday, June 6 in the morning was suggested. Tom said we would bring it up in the regular meeting and get input as to day and time.
3. Nancy stated the she and Dave LeGallee had successfully manned the WCAS exhibit for the Science Olympiad at Cleveland State University. Twenty-three of 24 schools invited showed up.. She told us we have been invited to the "Dike 14 Wildlife Festival" sponsored by the Dike 14 Environmental Education Collaborative. It will be held on May 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nancy will put out a sign-up sheet during the regular meeting tonight to get volunteers from WCAS to help by being tour guides and/or to staff an information exhibit. She will also set out a sign-up sheet for members to volunteer to help in the "Edgewater School Days" at Edgewater State Park. We would participate in the Fun Fair section with the WCAS wetlands mural.
4. Casey Tucker told us that Terri's invasive plant eradication grant application for \$1,000 had been accepted. However, Audubon at Home would like her to redirect it from a project where people go into natural areas to weed out invasive plants, to a more educational one in which people learn about what they can do to improve the habitat around their own homes and neighborhoods. This view is encouraged by the president of National Audubon, John Flicker, who wants Audubon at Home to expand and be a long-term concept to help increase member participation in meaningful personal

ways. When choosing what to do with the grant money, Casey said we need to ask how can people translate this into their immediate environment, their own yard or neighborhood? An example of this would be to have demonstration gardens; one with non-native plants and one shaped the same but with all native plants. Signs with names and explanations and possibly printed handouts could aid visitors in understanding the difference between the two gardens and in how to incorporate this into their own landscaping. Ease of maintenance and reduced pesticide use could also be featured. It was agreed that we should not take the grant money until a revised plan to use it is agreed upon.

5. There will be a "train the trainer" workshop at Wolf Creek in Medina on March 27, 2004. It is sponsored by Audubon Ohio and costs \$15 per person. A "Backyards for Wildlife" training manual will be given to each participant. These trainers would then be used as resource people for their communities by being on some kind of environmental resources list.

6. Tom adjourned the meeting at 7:30 so the general meeting could begin.