



## Ultrabird and Ultrawalk 2012

By Penny O'Connor

### Bird with us for the Rocky River IBA

It's a three-day bird field trip! Join Mary Anne Romito May 24, 25 and 26, 2012, Thursday, Friday and Saturday for the annual Ultrabird. This year we are making it our May field trip. Thursday we bird in Hinckley Reservation, Friday Mill Stream, and Saturday Rocky River Reservation. More than a fundraiser, it is a wonderful time of year to bird our Rocky River Important Bird Area. Last year there were fourteen species of warblers, six species of woodpeckers, five kinds of thrush, four species of swallows, including nesting cliff swallows, Bald Eagles...can we better last year's total of 91 species?

Here is how: Mary Anne will begin at 6 a.m. each day. Join up, or if you prefer a bit more sleep, we also have meeting places for 8 a.m. Birders are welcome on one day or on all three! Inside this newsletter are maps and directions to take you there. The Ultrabird route mirrors the route for the annual Ultrawalk. Why the Ultrabird? A "birdlife" companion to the annual 31-mile or 5-mile Ultrawalk, the Ultrabird also supports bird surveys and other conservation initiatives in the Rocky River Important Bird Area. We raise awareness of the birdlife and the needs of birds. As with the Ultrawalk, participants are encouraged to bring pledges from supporters. Funds will go toward publishing a final report on the IBA surveys from 2006-2010. We will conduct more bird surveys in selected areas of the Cleveland Metroparks in future years.

Come just for the birding, or collect some pledges too. Pledges can be by the bird, by the mile if you would also like to support the 31-mile Ultrawalk, or a flat rate. Registration and pledge forms are on our website at

**www.wcasohio.org**

or at our programs and field trips, or by calling Mary Anne Romito at 216-741-2352.

### Ultrawalk the Rocky River Valley, 31 miles or 5

The annual fundraising UltraWalk is Saturday, May 26, 2012. WCAS Board member Stan Searles and a number of other walkers will begin at 6:00 a.m. at Buzzards Roost in Hinckley Reservation. They will walk 31 miles to the Emerald Necklace Marina, near the mouth of the Rocky River.

The group will pass by Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Headquarters and Park Operations, located on the Valley Parkway in Fairview Park, about 3:30 p.m. At this point they will have 5 miles to go and will be joined by a number of additional walkers.

Interested in joining the group? You can walk the entire distance or join the walkers at Ranger Headquarters to do the last five miles.

Registration for the walk is \$20. Pledges can be by the mile, or if you also would like to support the 3-day Ultrabird, by the bird, or a flat rate. Registration and pledge forms are on our website at

**www.wcasohio.org**

or at our programs and field trips, or by calling Mary Anne Romito at 216-741-2352. See page 5 for additional information.

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## Field Trips

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### Saturday, July 7, 8:30 AM Margaret Peak Nature Preserve, Lorain County

**Leader: Jeanne Williams**

**Target Species: Dickcissel and Savannah, Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows**

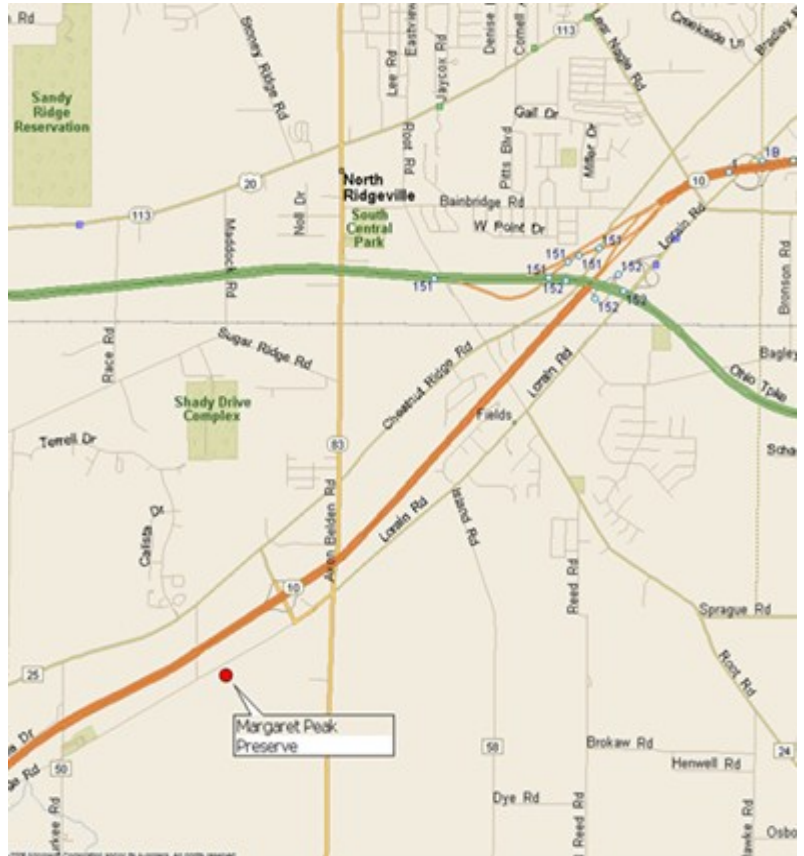
Eaton Township's Margaret Peak Nature Preserve opened in 2009, and since then has proved to be a great spot for sparrows in summer. This former family farm is being restored to a more natural state. So far Jeanne has observed 126 species in various habitats of the 98 acres. Habitats include fields, a 5-acre wetland, ponds and woods.

To get to Peak Preserve from Cleveland area: Take I-480 west to Route 10, continue on Route 10 west to Route 83.

Turn left or south on Route 83, then right or west on Butternut Ridge Rd.

Margaret Peak Preserve is about a 1/2 mile west on Butternut Ridge on the left or south side of Butternut Ridge.

Note that there are no restrooms at Peak Preserve. The closest fast food restaurant is McDonald's at I-480/Route 10 Exit 1, 32528 Butternut Ridge Rd. North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039. After exiting McDonald's, go back onto 480/Route 10 Westbound and proceed to Exit 3 (see above), or simply continue west on Lorain Road, which becomes Butternut Ridge in Eaton Township.



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## Audubon Spring Bird Walks

See the spring migrants during the Audubon spring bird walks. The walks will be held each **Sunday from April 15 to May 20, 2012, at 7:30 a.m.** A full list of locations can be found on our web site: [www.wcasohio.org/spring\\_bird\\_walks.htm](http://www.wcasohio.org/spring_bird_walks.htm)

The following is a partial list of local walks: Lake Isaac in Middleburg Hts. Hinckley Reservation at bridge on State Rd. Canal Way Center in Cuyahoga Hts. Rocky River Nature Center, North Olmsted, Station Rd. Bridge Trailhead, Brecksville.

For all birders, this is a wonderful opportunity to sample the waves of birds moving through some of the top birding spots around Cleveland. New birders, be sure to be out on each of these six Sundays. It is a great way to start birding.

Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland conducts these walks in cooperation with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, local park districts and the Holden Arboretum. Walks are led by expert volunteers and are free to all.

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## Field Trips

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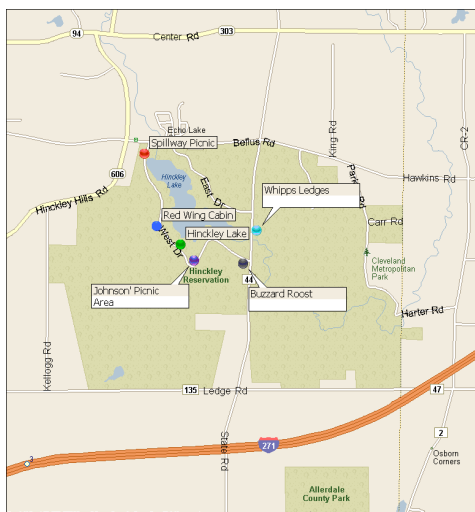
### Thursday, Friday & Saturday, May 24, 25, 26 - Ultrabird Also See Article on Page 1

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#### Thursday, May 24

6 am - Meet at *Johnson Picnic Area*, off West Dr. by the equestrian area, on the west side of Hinckley Lake. I-71 to Rt. 303 east to south on Hinckley Hills to East on Bellus to south on West Drive.

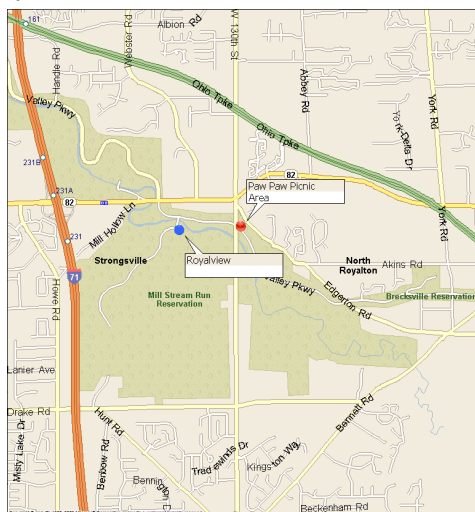
8 am - Meet at *Whipp's Ledges* in Hinckley Reservation. From I-71 take Rt. 303 east to State Road (south). Go past Bellus Road. Whipp's Ledges is on the left (east) side.



#### Friday, May 25

6 am - Meet at *PawPaw Picnic Area* in Mill Stream Reservation off Valley Parkway in North Royalton. Exit I-71 at Route. 82 (Royalton Road). Go east on Route. 82; turn right at Valley Parkway to just past W. 130th Street.

8 am - Meet at *Royalview Picnic Area*. Exit I-71 at Route 82, Royalton Road exit, east toward North Royalton. Turn right on Valley Parkway. Royalview is on the right; go over the small bridge; park in the lot on the left.



#### Saturday, May 26

6 am - Meet by the shelter at *Lagoon Picnic Area* in Rocky River Reservation. Lagoon Picnic Area is on Valley Parkway between Cedar Point Road and Spafford Road.

8 am - Meet at *Rocky River Nature Center* in the Rocky River Reservation. Use the smaller parking lot by Shepard Lane. Rocky River Nature Center is at 24000 Valley Parkway in North Olmsted.



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## Sunday, June 10, 8 AM Canalway, Ohio and Erie Canal Reservation

**Birding by Cart Accessible Field Trip**

**Trip Leader: JoAnn Kubicki**

**Target Species: Green Heron, Indigo Bunting, Mockingbird, Orioles, Swallows, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler**

All birders welcome! Join us for a morning of accessible birding, thanks to our friends at Canalway Center. The Cuyahoga Valley has rich birdlife. Ride in one of the golf carts or walk along birding. Come one come all! Birders may ride the whole way, or ride part way and walk part way. The golf carts will erase terrain and distance. To reserve a spot in the carts, call or e-mail Penny O'Connor 216-676-4859, [pjo@earthlink.net](mailto:pjo@earthlink.net).

Directions: Take I-77 to Grant Ave. Take Grant Ave west to East 49 St. Turn south or left on E. 49 St. to Whittlesey Way. A big sign says welcome to Cuyahoga Heights, and there is also a big sign for Cleveland Metroparks behind it. Turn right on Whittlesey Way and follow it to the end. The Center's Parking lot is at the end of the Whittlesey Way.

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## Programs

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All WCAS programs are free and open to the public. Our monthly programs are held the first Tuesday of each month, September through May, at Rocky River Nature Center, 24000 Valley Parkway, North Olmsted, Ohio. For a map and directions see [www.wcasohio.org](http://www.wcasohio.org).

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**Tuesday, May 1, 2012 at 7:30 PM**



### Ohio's Underworld - Surprises in the Dark

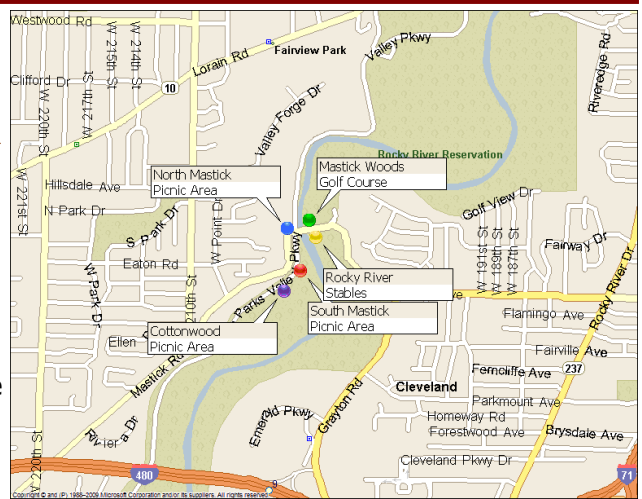
Cave expert Dr. Horton Hobbs will present information on caves and Ohio's karst region followed by results of ongoing research in Ohio's subterranean world. Above ground features, such as springs, sinkholes, blue holes and rock shelters as well as below the surface formations will be highlighted. In addition, cave-adapted organisms that dwell in the underworld of Ohio will be featured.



**Tuesday, June 5, 2012 at 6:00 PM**

### Picnic and Plant Exchange Held outdoors at Cottonwood Picnic Area (NOT at Rocky River Nature Center)

Our annual Audubon picnic and plant exchange. Bring your dinner (grill will be available for cooking), your family and/or friends AND bring any plants, seeds, bulbs that need homes. They can be houseplants or outdoor plants. If you don't have any plants to bring that is OK, but adopt an "orphan" plant. We also have a bird walk after dinner. Note the earlier than usual starting time! Cottonwood Picnic Area is off Valley Parkway south of the Mastick Road intersection, just south of the South Mastick Picnic Area.



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## July & August - Field Trips & Weeders in the Wild Only! Go Birding!

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### Weeders in the Wild

Join Western Cuyahoga Audubon as we go into nature and restore biodiversity one plant at a time.

**Saturday, April 28, 10:00 am Saturday May 5, 10:00 am Saturday May 19, 10:00 am**  
**Bacon Woods, Lorain County Metro Parks**

Help celebrate HerbFair on April 28 with a Garlic Mustard Pull. On May 5th and 19th we'll learn about native plants with Dan Styers. Bacon Woods is an amazing place with a variety of spring wildflowers. Join us in our efforts to appreciate and maintain the diversity!

**Saturday, May 12, 10:00 am**

### Wendtwood, Lorain County, along the west branch of the Rocky river

RSVP by calling 440-759-8220 or email Terri Martincic at [naturenut@wowway.com](mailto:naturenut@wowway.com).

A map will be forwarded to participants. Western Reserve Land Conservancy and Cleveland Museum of Natural History staff will join us on this privately owned conservation easement property. Enjoy a wonderful hike as we scout for Garlic Mustard. Hopefully we'll see the Trumpeter Swans.

**Garlic Mustard Pull, Elmwood Park in Rocky River, Saturday, May 19, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon**

Elmwood Park Road is off of Elmwood Rd. Elmwood Rd. runs between Lake Road (Rt 6) and Detroit Road (Rt 254). Elmwood Rd is just west of Wagar Road.

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# Ultrawalk Helps WCAS do its Mission

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By Tom Romito, WCAS President

## Is anyone up for a 31-mile walk?

If you're new to the Audubon scene, you should know that it's time for the Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society's sixth annual Ultrawalk, a grueling 31-mile walk from Hinckley to Lakewood on one day. This year, it's going to be Saturday, May 26.



## Ultrawalkers enter the Emerald Necklace Marina, 2010

Only diehards would submit themselves to this kind of punishment! Those are the kind of people we need to help the Audubon Society promote conservation of habitat for birds and other wildlife. We do this by getting pledges from friends, relatives, and colleagues for the miles we walk. These funds, in turn, help us fulfill our WCAS mission.

We use those funds in many ways to do our mission. One way is by publishing a final report on our 2006-2011 Important Bird Area breeding bird surveys in the Rocky River valley and Lake to Lake Trail in Middleburg Heights. We hope to make progress on the report this year. Other ways are defraying the costs of publishing a quarterly newsletter and conducting field trips, programs, and outreach events in the community. These costs are not huge, but they add up!

Walking 31 miles in one day is a commitment and labor of love

at any age. People from 30-60 years old have gone the distance before. Nobody just goes out one day and walks 31 miles. It takes training and preparation. Those of us who plan to walk are conditioning our bodies and toughening our feet to withstand the rigors of the effort.

The Ultrawalk is an example of "earned income." All non-profit organizations raise funds in some way to support their missions. Besides the Ultrawalk, WCAS raises funds by mailing our annual appeal letter, selling shade-grown coffee, participating in the annual Greater Cleveland Combined Federal Campaign, offering Watermark bird guides for donations to the public, and conducting the annual Ultrabird, the Ultrawalk's companion event (See page 1).

Besides the people who are going to make the Ultrawalk, we need volunteers to perform tasks that support the walk. One task is planting a large banner in the ground at strategic points along the walk route to attract the attention of passers-by. Another task is participating in the last five miles of the walk from Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Headquarters (Park Ops) on Valley Parkway to Emerald Necklace Marina in Lakewood. Normally about 20 people join the walk there. We also need a few people to staff a table at Park Ops to sign up walkers at that point. Lastly, we need some people to direct the walking group to the finish line at the marina.



Stan Searles and Tom Romito enter the Emerald Necklace Marina to complete the Ultrawalk in 2008

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## Want to be a WCAS Board Member?

Remember that opportunities abound in WCAS. How about considering these:

Data Entry/Spreadsheet Development  
Presentation/Teaching Outreach  
Contact Development  
Hospitality for Meetings  
Fundraising

Planning  
Arranging Field Trips  
Leading Tours or Field Trips  
Event Participation  
Record Keeping

## Welcome New Members

Terry Hogan  
Mary Lou McGuire  
Barbara Miske  
Dr. Barbara Shagawat



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## May Migration Mania Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve

Savor the birdlife at the newly-opened Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (a.k.a. Dike 14) on Saturday, May 19. Top-flight volunteer bird guides will lead walks at 7:30 and 8:30. Entrance is now relocated behind the ODNR State Park office. Take the Martin Luther King Dr. exit off of I-90, turn north toward Lake Erie, and follow Lakeshore Blvd. to the top of the hill. Turn left into the park office parking lot. Can't visit on May 19? Did you know that CLNP is now open every day during daylight hours? There is a 1.3 mile loop trail. The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority manages this 88-acre preserve, designated by Audubon Ohio as an Important Bird Area.

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### Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp

Get your 2012 Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp, available from WCAS at programs and field trips. The \$15 stamp features a spotted salamander. Your packet also includes a lapel pin, a window sticker and an information card. Buying this collectible wildlife stamp will show that you support:

- ✦ habitat restoration, land purchases and conservation easements
- ✦ keeping common species common
- ✦ endangered & threatened native species
- ✦ educational products for students and wildlife enthusiasts
- ✦ wildlife and habitat research projects



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## WCAS Honors Young Scientists at NEOSEF

### ***WCAS honors young scientists at NEOSEF***

A Project on the Rocky River watershed and one on fracking (a process for extracting natural gas from shale) took first-place Special Awards from Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society at the 59th annual Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSEF) on March 13, 2012. Honorable mention went to work on butterflies and on water quality. Our judges focused on studies of birds or environmental science, with emphasis on local watersheds. This year's event was held at Cleveland State University. More than 600 students in grades 7-12 from 80 schools and seven counties competed for a chance to go to the International Science and Engineering Fair in May. More about NEOSEF at: <http://www.neosef.org/> Thanks to our judges Michelle Manzo, Penny O'Connor, Tom Romito and Scott Rush.

#### ***First Place Special Awards from WCAS:***

- \*Alex Reddy from St. Clare Elementary: Environmental dangers caused by fracking.
- \*Rachel Yurchisin from Padua Franciscan High: The Rocky River Watershed, a tale of two branches.

#### ***Honorable Mention Special Awards from WCAS:***

- \*Sara Adamson from St. John of the Cross Elementary: Which sorbent works most efficiently in the clean-up of oil spills?
- \*Alyssa Chow of Lake Ridge Academy Elementary: Are high levels of phosphates, nitrates, pH and turbidity found in pond water in Lorain County?
- \*Erica Duncan from Lake Ridge Academy Elementary: Is there a difference in the biodiversity of macro- and microorganisms found in man-made marshes and natural marshes?
- \*Heather Eaken from Stanton Middle School: How does temperature affect the growth of Painted Lady Butterflies?
- \*Randon Rybak from Incarnate Word Academy Elementary: What location in Lake Erie will have the highest concentration of phosphorus?

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## Volunteer Page

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### Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve Open House

On Saturday, May 19 Western Cuyahoga Audubon, a member of the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve Environmental Education Collaborative, will help to host the Open House. The event begins at 7:30 AM and ends at 2:00 PM. Assistance includes bird walk leaders at 7:30 and 8:30 walks, people to walk the trails and make sure visitors stay on the trails. There will also be a WCAS display and we always need a person or two to staff our display and engage visitors. It is always an enjoyable event since visitors are thrilled to see this wild area so close to the city. Come on out.

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### Kudos

There have been several events with which WCAS members have been involved and are to be thanked. We always appreciate everyone's assistance and support.

The Great Backyard Bird Count on Sunday, February 19 at The Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve had the following folks that participated and deserve thanks; **Fred Dinkelbach, Bob Finklestein, Nancy Howell, Paula Lozano** and **Tom Romito**.

On Saturday, March 10 **Jan Holkenborg, Nancy Howell** and **Kathleen Tiburzi** set up and monitored the bird identification portion of Science Olympiad held at Cleveland State University. This year 11 schools participated; it is great that those schools, students, teachers and coaches were involved. They deserve thanks as well.

**Nancy Howell** and **Tom Romito** staffed the WCAS display on Buzzard Day, Sunday, March 19 at the Hinckley Elementary School. WCAS shared the room with the live turkey vulture which always attracts lots of attention. Thank you.

One final thank you goes out to **Mary Anne Romito**, our webmaster, who keeps the website updated and changing. Sometimes we think that things get done automatically; nope, there is a real person behind those changes. Thank you Mary Anne!

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### Carbon Offset Project

As you may recall from the previous newsletter, WCAS has begun a project to offset the carbon impact of some of the driving done for our field trips. Modeled after the Carbon Offset Bird Project launched at the 2011 Midwest Birding Symposium, the process involves participants voluntarily contributing to a fund, based on mileage. Money generated by WCAS will go toward habitat preservation or restoration in the Rocky River Important Bird Area or other area in need. Thus far \$137.16 has been collected. Once we reach \$1000.00 the monies will be used in projects mentioned above. We will keep our members informed via the website and newsletter.

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### Contact Us

**WESTERN CUYAHOGA  
AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
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Cleveland, OH 44109  
Phone: 216-741-2352  
Fax: 216-741-1879  
Email: [info@wcasohio.org](mailto:info@wcasohio.org)



*Visit our website*  
**[www.wcasohio.org](http://www.wcasohio.org)**

#### WCAS Chapter Newsletter

Published 4 times per year in  
February, May, August and  
November by the Western  
Cuyahoga Audubon Society.  
**[www.wcasohio.org](http://www.wcasohio.org)** is the official  
Chapter Web Site.

WCAS Board Meetings held at  
6:30 pm prior to each program  
at Rocky River Nature Center.  
General public and WCAS  
members welcome.

#### President

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#### Directors at Large

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Gayle Albers

Stan Searles

Scott Rush



## WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY

### Chapter Supporter Application

**Why wait! Join WCAS as a chapter supporter.**

Chapter Membership year: September 1 through August 31

Chapter Dues give you our newsletter, a nametag and a window cling.

**Check one:**

**1 or 2 people**

**Family**

**Organization**

**Dues**

**\$20**

**\$35**

**\$55**

Additional Donation (**Check one**)

**\$5**

**\$10**

**\$20**

**Other**

\$\_\_\_\_\_

**Total enclosed**

\$\_\_\_\_\_

**NAME**

**ADDRESS**

**CITY/STATE/ZIP**

**TELEPHONE**

**EMAIL ADDRESS**

**Make your check payable to WCAS. Mail to Nancy Howell, treasurer,  
19340 Fowles Rd., Middleburg Hts. Ohio, 44130**

