

**18 YEARS**

OF BIRD BANDING AT THE NATURE CENTER with

**18,069 BIRDS BANDED**

**SPRING 2020**

302 BIRDS captured; 92 BIRDS previously banded

**FALL 2020**

707 BIRDS captured; 111 BIRDS previously banded



## BANDING BIRDS FOR SCIENCE

by Julie West, *Nature Center Honorary Life Trustee*

In a quiet corner of our All People's Trail, myself and a team of dedicated volunteers wait for birds. Equipped with tiny metal ankle bracelets, scientific notebooks, and mist nets, we band wild birds—for science.

I began the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes Bird Banding Project in 2001 to learn more about the lives of birds. While most of the birds we band are migratory, we also band birds that live their entire lives only within our 20-acres.

Birds are carefully captured using mist nets. Resembling a 4-tiered volleyball net, the black nylon nets are hard to see against vegetation. Birds flying through the area are swaddled within the net and taken to the bird banding station—a simple plastic table with a few volunteers—where we record the bird's species, age, sex, wing length, fat, and muscle. Birds are fitted with a small, aluminum band on a leg with a unique nine digit number. This simple process only takes a few minutes, and the bird is released soon after. Banding permits are required from both the Federal and State Governments, and data is sent to the Black Swamp Bird Observatory and ultimately the Bird Banding Laboratory of the Federal Government.

The Nature Center is a great place for birds to call “home.” Amazingly, a number of migratory songbirds have returned year after year, having traveled for hundreds of miles, only to return to raise their next brood at the Nature Center, which is astounding.

*Bird banding takes place Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from the third week in April through May, and again the third week in August through October each year. The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes is one of several satellite banding stations of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory. More information at [shakerlakes.org](http://shakerlakes.org).*

### Why is the Nature Center the ideal spot for bird banding?

The rich diversity of habitats within a mere 20 acres creates an incredible opportunity to expose children in environmental education programs to birds and scientific research. The construction of the All People's Trail in 2019 resulted in positive changes to the habitat, with non-native trees and shrubs removed prior to the construction and new native trees and shrubs replanted in the area. This means better and more plentiful food sources to attract migrating and resident birds.

**I banded a two year old song sparrow on my first day of banding at the Nature Center. I recaptured this bird each of the next 7 years, so we know he lived to be at least 9 years old. Many songbirds perish in their first year of life.**

In handling birds through banding, I get a sense of their temperaments. The feistiest bird based on size is the black capped chickadee. Weighing 11 grams, this tiny bird is fearless, often pecking me to let it go. Other birds, like thrushes, are very calm in my hand. Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of my work is the ability to teach students at the Nature Center about a bird in my hand and see their eyes light up with awe and curiosity. Birds are incredible and show how we are all interconnected with living things on Earth.

## ALL ABOUT BIRDS!

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CHANGES ITS TUNE

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# NATURE CONNECTION

## NEW SPARROW SONG GOES VIRAL

by Ashley Hall, *Marketing Coordinator & Environmental Educator*

"OH SWEET CANADA, CANADA, CANADA," is a commonly heard bird song throughout our region's forests in the spring, but recently, the white-throated sparrow has changed its tune. A study published on July 2 in the journal *Current Biology* shows that some males have changed their song to "Oh sweet Cana- Cana- Canada" over the course of just two decades, and like many popular songs, it has taken the airwaves by storm.



fun  
fact:

White-throated sparrows readily visit bird feeders for millet and black oil sunflower seeds.

To learn more about this change of tune, visit our blog:  
[shakerlakes.org/new-sparrow-song](https://shakerlakes.org/new-sparrow-song)



## ART ON VIEW: PORTRAITS OF FLOWERS BY GLORIA PLEVIN

This exhibit features Gloria Plevin's stunningly beautiful portraits of flowers in watercolor, gouache, and acrylic paint. Plevin expresses her love of the world around us, especially flowers, through her exquisite paintings. Her subjects—amaryllis, calla lilies, orchids, thistles, and more—come from her Chautauqua perennial gardens, Heinen's, or a local florist.

Exhibit runs from Sunday, November 15, 2020 through Monday, February 15, 2021 at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. Pieces may be purchased for a fee. A portion of each purchase benefits the Nature Center.

Contact Kim Bihler at [bihler@shakerlakes.org](mailto:bihler@shakerlakes.org) to schedule a private showing in the event the Nature Center building remains closed due to COVID-19.



## WINTER PROGRAMS & EVENTS: ADULT, FAMILY & BIRDING PROGRAMS

### MEET CLEVELAND'S COMMUNITY SCIENTISTS: ORNITHOLOGY

**Wednesday, December 9 | 6-7PM | Virtual Program via Zoom**

Join us to meet scientists in the Cleveland birding community to learn about what they do, why they do it, and how you can get involved. **Free to members,\* \$7.50 non-members. Registration required.**

*\*This program is free to our members and members of collaborating partners as a special thank you to current and future community science volunteers.*

### BIRD WALKS

**Sundays: December 13, January 10, February 14 | 8-10AM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes**

Join a guided walk through the Shaker Parklands looking and listening for birds. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot. Due to COVID-19, bring your own binoculars. **Registration required to keep group sizes limited. Suggested donation: \$5.**

*\*Note: Our building (and restrooms) remain closed to the public. Please plan accordingly.*

### A GUIDE FOR NEW BIRDERS

**presented by Lauren Pharr**

**Wednesday, January 13 | 7-8PM | Virtual Program via Zoom**

Meet Ornithologist and co-founder of #BlackBirdersWeek Lauren Pharr as she gives tips to help new birders build their skill and discusses why birding is important for science. **\$5 members, \$7.50 non-members. Registration required.**

### INTRO TO WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY: BIRDS

**Thursdays: January 14, 21, 28 | 7-8PM | Virtual Program via Zoom**

In this three-part virtual photograph series geared toward beginners, local nature photographer Steve Cagan will provide basic training and individual assignments. Peer feedback and instructor review provided. Digital camera or smartphone required. **\$20 member, \$35 non-member. Registration required.**

### BIRDING IN PEACE

**presented by Danielle Belleny**

**Wednesday, February 3 | 7-8PM | Virtual Program via Zoom**

Join Ornithologist, Danielle Belleny, to learn tips for beginner birders, how to go birding anywhere, and how everyone can contribute to bird conservation (including from their own home). **\$5 member, \$7.50 non-member. Registration required.**

### WONDERS OF WINTER

**Saturday, February 13 | 1-3PM**

**Nature Center at Shaker Lakes**

Experience the wonders of winter with hikes, crafts and activities to celebrate life in the forest when the weather turns cold.

**\$6 member, \$8 non-member. Children 2 & under are free. Registration required.**



## VOLUNTEER NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

Many thanks to our volunteers for their ongoing support of the Nature Center and its programs. A special THANK YOU to the following groups: Greater Cleveland Volunteers, Ruffing Montessori, Boy Scouts Troop 179 of Mentor, Friends of Lower Lake, and CJCLDS - Euclid Ward Youth.

### WONDERS OF WINTER

**Saturday, February 13 | 12:30–3:30PM**

Craft and activity volunteers needed to help children and families explore life in the forest when the weather turns cold.

### PROJECT FEEDERWATCH

**January–March | Select Weekdays | Nature Center at Shaker Lakes**

**Abbreviated Season—The Count Goes On.** We are looking for volunteers interested in counting birds for science as part of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch. All birding abilities welcome! Training provided.

### WINTER TRAIL AMBASSADORS (Weekday Shifts Available)

Help provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere on our trails as a Trail Ambassador. Warmly greet guests, share wildlife sightings, and answer frequently asked questions. Perfect for friendly, outgoing individuals. Training, restrooms, and an indoor space to warm-up provided.

**More information on volunteer opportunities can be found at [shakerlakes.org/volunteer](https://shakerlakes.org/volunteer), or to sign up for any of these opportunities, please email [volunteer@shakerlakes.org](mailto:volunteer@shakerlakes.org).**

*All on-site programs & events require 6' of physical distancing & masks.*

### SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME: REDUCING FOOD WASTE

**presented by Carin Miller, Education Specialist**

**at Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District**

**Tuesday, February 23 | 6–7PM | Virtual Program via Zoom**

Did you know that the average American throws away approximately one pound of food per day? Join us to learn how to shop smarter, plan meals, and learn creative uses for food scraps to reduce your carbon footprint. **\$5 members, \$7.50 non-members. Registration required.**



## ENHANCING YOUR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

CAMPAIGN for  
THE NATURE CENTER  
at SHAKER LAKES

## CONSTRUCTION OF NEW STEARNS WOODLAND TRAIL NEARS COMPLETION

We have successfully completed the first two phases of our comprehensive campaign to restore and revitalize your outdoor classroom. Both the Lavelle Family Amphitheater and the All People's Trail are now open and enjoyed by thousands in our region. The enhancements and renovations of the Stearns Woodland Trail, the campaign's third phase, are nearly complete, and the trail is now open for all to enjoy. The Stearns Woodland trail now includes a new ADA-accessible entrance and trail segment that leads to a nature play area and group deck along Doan Brook, two newly reconstructed bridges, a wetland observation deck, improved boardwalks, and newly stabilized trail segments.

This spring, we will be constructing an ADA-accessible treehouse designed by Washington-based Nelson Treehouse Supply, known for their popular Animal Planet show, Treehouse Masters. We are thrilled to see our Stearns Woodland Trail bring new opportunities for all to explore nature, while still providing a scenic setting for respite and reflection. We look forward to seeing you at a grand opening celebration in 2021!



## INTRODUCING THE LEGACY PATHWAY

The Legacy Pathway, unveiled this fall, celebrates occasions that matter and those who have made a difference in our lives. To be part of the second installation, purchase your nameplate or leaf by December 31. Contact Patty Albrecht, 216.321.5935 ext.232 or email [albrecht@shakerlakes.org](mailto:albrecht@shakerlakes.org).

# junior naturalist

Need activities for **YOUR JUNIOR NATURALIST** or to help supplement your curriculum? We have fun, nature-based activities for kids of all ages. Please share with educators, friends, and family! [SHAKERLAKES.ORG/JRNAT](http://SHAKERLAKES.ORG/JRNAT)

## DON'T MISS SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP

June 14–August 13

Our in-person, beloved Summer Outdoor Adventure Camp is **back!** Offering nine unique weeks of in-person camps for children ages 3 ½ through Grade 9 with themes such as *Water Safari* and *Environmental Inventors*, your junior naturalist will spend each week of camp learning, exploring and having FUN with our highly trained environmental educators and camp counselors. Half day sessions available for those ages 3 ½ to 4 ½. **Pricing varies, membership discounts of up to \$30 per session available. Limit 8 children per group.**

### SPRING BREAK CAMP

March 29–April 2 | 9AM–3PM daily (no aftercare)

Spring Break Camp will take place in-person this year with exciting new daily themes such as *The Great Space Race* and *Spring Scientists*. Register for one day, or up to all five! Limit of 8 children per group. **\$60 members; \$65 non-member.**

### POP-UP CAMP | 9AM–12PM

Grades 3–5 | Select Wednesdays: June 23, July 14, July 28

Grades 6–9 | Select Thursdays: June 24, July 15, July 29

Interested in an in-person camp experience but not comfortable with a full week of camp? Pop-Up Camp is designed to provide children grades 3–5 and 6–9 a hands-on camp experience away from the screen, but with a limited exposure to groups of people. Sessions held primarily outdoors with themes including *Monarchs* and *Cool not Creepy*. Limit 8 children per group. **\$45 members; \$50 non-member per day session.**

### VIRTUAL SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP

June 14–July 2

Virtual camp will be offered the first three weeks of summer with additional weeks contingent upon enrollment. Themes include: *Nature Challenge*, *Taking Flight* and *What's Outside My Window*. Virtual camp offers 8–10 hours per week of combined instruction, Zoom meetings, pre-recorded material, at-home activities and supplies. Camp capacity: 20. **\$85 members; \$90 non-members.**

Due to limited camp sizes, please register early to ensure your spot!

To become a member and take advantage of membership savings visit [shakerlakes.org](http://shakerlakes.org) TODAY!

For more information, including detailed pricing for each camp and to register, visit [shakerlakes.org/camp](http://shakerlakes.org/camp).

## SAVE THE DATE!

### REGISTRATION COMING SOON

1.11 Member registration begins

1.25 Public registration begins

Register by 2.15 and SAVE with an Early Bird Discount of \$5 per camp session!

## NATURE STORY TIME

### Select Mondays:

December 7, January 11, February 1 | 4:30–5PM

### Virtual Program via Zoom

Children ages 3 ½ to 7 years of age with an adult are invited to join the us on Zoom to read a story and partake in a related craft. This season, characters in the stories teach us that there are many different ways to get to know the birds in your neighborhood!

**\$5 per family. Register at [shakerlakes.org/winter-programs](http://shakerlakes.org/winter-programs).**

December 7 | **Bird Count**

by Susan Edwards Richmond

January 11 | **Beautiful Blackbird**

by Ashley Bryan

February 1 | **Love Is**

by Diane Adams

## FAMILY ADVENTURE PACK

### BIRDING BONANZA

Pick up select Wednesdays: December 16, January 13, February 10

Grab a Family Adventure Pack and explore some of Ohio's BIRDS! Each kit is curated by our education staff to include a bird themed project and educational supplies for at-home discovery. Recommended for ages 3 ½ to 7. **\$25 member, \$35 non-member per pack. Register for the kit pick-up day that is most convenient. Pre-purchase required.**