



Members of the Audubon Society of Kentucky go on a bird walk at The Arboretum in Lexington. Photo credit: David Lang.

## Birdwatchers Flock Together

Audubon Society of Kentucky welcomes novice birders

by Abby Malik, *Staff Writer*

Even when leaves fall from the trees and temperatures drop below freezing, nature is still happening all around us. The Audubon Society of Kentucky (ASK) provides those who have a desire to get outdoors any time of year the opportunity to explore Central Kentucky's diverse bird community, whether you're a bird expert, a casual observer or just starting out as a nature explorer.

ASK, which is not affiliated with the National Audubon Society, organizes bird-watching field trips throughout the Bluegrass region that are open to all age groups; membership in ASK isn't required. David Lang, co-secretary of the organization, says ASK has a membership of around 70 nature lovers.

"We have a lot of retirees and older people in the group," Lang said. They are also joined by young professionals, college students and middle agers.

The group bird walks take place in diverse areas such as the Lexington Cemetery, Shaker Village in Harrodsburg, Minor Clark Fish Hatchery and Cave Run Lake near Morehead, Maine Chance Farm in Lexington and several others. The

group has even traveled as far as Cumberland Falls State Park on its expeditions.

Lang says exploring different locations is important for successful bird searches.

"Habitat is the key for finding different species of birds, thus we offer the range of locations to include as many habitats as possible," he said.

The outings are a wonderful way for older adults to meet other people, spend time in nature, visit different areas of the state and, of course, learn about Kentucky's birds. Nearly all of the bird walks and other activities, which include bird-seed sales and potluck dinners, are scheduled on weekends, making participation easy for those who are busy during the week.

If you're interested in going on an ASK outings, you don't have worry that your bird education isn't up to par. In fact, Lang said, "We love novice birders. For those of us that hardly ever see anything new, it is great to see other people experience seeing new species for the first time. It makes us appreciate these 'old friends' with fresh eyes."

Lang offers assurance for those

who think they might not be mobile enough to join ASK's outdoor adventures.

"Birders typically do not move at a very fast pace," he said. "We are always stopping to look at stuff, not just birds."

During nature walks, a group, usually averaging around a dozen participants, typically covers not more than a couple of miles on foot, and everyone goes at their own pace. The walks, Lang says, are as much about socializing as they are about the nature experience.

Walk participants should bring along some type of magnification, preferably binoculars, but a camera with a large zoom will also do. For those who don't own binoculars, ASK group members have extra pairs. A bird guidebook is also a good item to have on hand.

ASK has several bird walks and other events scheduled from January through March. Details are available at [www.audubonsocietyofky.org](http://www.audubonsocietyofky.org) under the "Activities" tab. While membership is not required to participate in ASK nature walks, those interested in joining can visit the website for a membership form. Membership dues are \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a family.

The walks are as much about socializing as they are about the nature experience.



### Cedar Ridge Health Campus staff understands.

There are many choices to make when caring for a loved one. Our **specially selected, compassionate and caring staff** hope to make the decision easier.



Cedar Ridge Health Campus  
1217 US HWY 62 E  
Cynthiana, KY 41031  
(859) 234-2702

- 13 bed suites
- Family-style dining
- Sunday brunch
- Secured outdoor courtyard

For more information,  
please contact us today!