WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for June 24, 2024
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about birds, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

Last summer I had the opportunity to hang out at a couple 4-H meetings with the Cloverbud members of our 4-H Club. While the older members have their business meeting, these Kindergarten and first graders learn a lesson or do a craft. After completing a nature hunt during one of the first meetings, it was obvious these children liked being outside.

So, a few weeks later, I took a couple of field guides for them to look through with plants and birds. They were enthralled with the bird book. I quickly found an app to download with bird calls. Before I knew it, I was the one completely enthralled. How in nearly five decades of my life had I not appreciated the complexity and uniqueness of these songbirds that surrounded me every year?

At our house we have several cardinals that we hear often. When my brother was little he had a key chain with five different alarm sounds. (It drove us crazy.) My little cardinal friend is perched up on the power lines and he sounds like about two of those alarm sounds. He almost sounds like he is calling to my neighbor, "Judy! Judy! Judy!"

My son built bluebird houses with my dad a couple of summers ago. We put one up last summer so we could see it from the sliding glass door in the backyard. They were so fun to watch peek in and out, and in and out. There is just no blue quite as vibrant as the Eastern bluebird.

Not long ago, while enjoying dinner on the patio, I quizzed my family with bird calls from that free Audubon Bird Guide app. Chirps and tweets and screeches and trills. Then I noticed that a red-bellied woodpecker was making his way closer to us. The more I played the calls on my phone, the more he responded until finally getting bored with us and made his way back to the trees.

My next feat was calling the swallows out of the barn to swoop around the patio umbrella. How amazing that they heard me from 50 yards away and came out to see who the new bird was in their territory!

I have an Extension colleague who is a self-proclaimed bird nerd. I was able to go on a short hike with her this spring during a work retreat and her fascination was contagious. Laura loves to spend time in nature and observe birds. In an OSU Extension Live Healthy Live Well post, she shared several benefits that have been confirmed by research. A study found that just listening to bird song contributes to perceived attention restoration and stress recovery. Regular exposure to nature is associated with improvements in cardiovascular disease and longevity.

I must confess that I used to be annoyed at 4:30 AM when the birds began making a racket. Now I have learned that many songbirds sing a special song first thing in the morning. It is only sung to welcome the dawn. Now I hear praises rather than racket, and that gives me a new appreciation and joy during these summer months. I encourage you to observe the birds you encounter this week.

In fact, if you send a bird photo to me at marrison.12@osu.edu by June 30, I'll put your name in a drawing for a free bluebird house. I can't wait to see your pictures.

And now let's see what else is new from OSU Extension.

This year the OSU Extension Food Preservation Team is offering free webinars covering the "Traditions and Trends in Home Food Preservation." I will be teaching about Trending Recipes in Food Preservation tomorrow Tuesday, June 18 from 12:00-12:30 PM. Sign up for this free webinar on our website or Facebook page.

This summer, I will teach a Freeze Drying Fundamentals class at Schumaker Farms on Tuesday, July 16 from 6:00-7:30 PM. We'll talk about equipment, logistics, and taste some freeze dried foods. I will also teach a Canning Basics workshop at Schumaker Farms on Wednesday, August 7 from 6:00-7:30 PM. These classes are free, but registration is required at coshocton.osu.edu.

And remember, I am available for food preservation calls and questions any time.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and empower our families, individuals, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!