

Well, it is over for another year. Last weekend I went to International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) at Magee Marsh in Crane Creek State Park on the south shore of Lake Erie. Wow! The weather was wet and cold but the birds, as usual, were spectacular. Among my group of birding friends were two new birders. What an experience they had! At the end of Friday, our first day, they were a bit dazed, all the birds and bird songs seemingly indistinguishable, a visual and audio mishmash. By the end of Saturday, they were pointing out birds and tentatively identifying them. On Sunday I watched as one of them helped another visitor find and identify a warbler! IMBD is to warbler identification what Berlitz is to foreign language! It is “immersion birding “at its best. If you enjoy birding or want to learn, I cannot encourage you enough to make a trip to IMBD an annual event. I saw over 100 species including 22 species of warblers, 4 of Ohio’s 6 vireos and 5 of our 6 swallows, all without breaking my neck to glimpse a tiny bird way at the top of a tree. That’s a pleasure of Magee Marsh; the birds so close, often at eye level, sometimes inches from your face, too close for binoculars. There are still warblers close to home, but the peak of the migration has passed on north. (They will be back in late summer and early fall, but without their vibrant courtship colors and songs.) Take some time to visit Germantown Metro Park or drive to Gilmore Ponds, or stroll through Bull’s Run. It is nesting time for our breeding birds. Their activity and singing are obvious. Get out there and enjoy!

Suggested links:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5401369>

NPR story on bird migration.

http://www.metroparks.org/_home/default.aspx

Metro Parks

<http://butlercountymetroparks.org/index.cfm?page=gilmorePonds>

Gilmore Ponds