



IDEA STATION REPORT FOR 03-03-2019

1. This is the report of the idea stations conducted from 2:45-3:45 p.m. during the COAC annual business meeting at Novak Education Center in Aurora, Ohio on March 3, 2019.

2. Kurt Miske and Tom Romito, Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society, introduced the hour by explaining how WCAS used the idea station technique last fall.

3. Facilitators led conversations with meeting participants in breakout sessions to accelerate idea-sharing. Some participants rotated between idea stations at 10-minute intervals and some stayed for all 30 minutes allocated to the idea-sharing.

4. The following paragraphs detail the ideas that participants generated at each idea station.

5. PLASTICS AND CHEMICAL POLLUTION (FRAN MENTCH, NORTHEAST OHIO SIERRA CLUB, FACILITATED).

- a. Reduce use of or don't use chemical herbicides and pesticides because they go into our drinking water as the result of watershed runoff.

- b. Plant native plants that pollinators will use.
- c. Reduce the size of residential and commercial lawns.
- d. Construct and use rain gardens and rain barrels.
- e. Do not buy products that contain polyethylene and polypropylene.
- f. Don't use drinking straws in restaurants.
- g. Pick up trash while birding or walking in parks and neighborhoods.
- h. Use reusable bags for trash.
- i. Reduce waste at private and public events.
- j. Recruit speakers to talk about pollution at public events.
- k. Encourage organizations to comment on the National Environmental Protection Act.
- l. Research which sunscreens are pollutable.
- m. Do not buy over packaged products.
- n. Discussion occurred about what to do with "clamshells," which are the plastic containers in which we buy berries at the grocery store. The issue is whether or not they are recyclable. The answer is that according to the City of Cleveland Division of Solid Waste we cannot recycle any clamshells plastic or styrofoam because there is no market for them and we are forced to put them in the trash.

6. YOUTH, DIVERSITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY. (LIZ WOEDL, AUDUBON MIAMI VALLEY, FACILITATED).

- a. Work together with arts and science teachers, churches, scouting groups, and Ohio Young Birders Club.

- b. Go where groups of people intersect.
- c. Use social media to organize content.

- d. Share content with COAC chapters.

- e. Seek role models.

- f. Do hands-on projects to get everyone involved.

7. FUND-RAISING. HERE'S WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID THEY ARE DOING OR COULD BE DOING IN THEIR CHAPTERS TO RAISE MONEY FOR THEIR OPERATING BUDGETS AND PROJECTS (TOM ROMITO, WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY, FACILITATED).

- a. Collect dues.

- b. Conduct annual appeals.

- c. Sell bird seed and native plants.

- d. Hold silent auctions.

- e. Hold art exhibitions.

- f. Hold ticketed events.

- g. Do face-to-face asks for donations.

- h. Arrange business-chapter partnerships.

- i. Seek donation challenges and matches to incentivize first-time donors.

- j. Form relationships with “deep-pocket” members.

- k. Make direct asks project-focused.

- l. Ask for honoraria when chapters do outreach presentations.
- m. Seek grants from environmentally-friendly funders.
- n. Advertise on the social media.
- o. Organize “crowdfunding.”

8. COAC EDUCATION, EVENTS, AND RESOURCES (TIM COLBORN, OHIO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, FACILITATED).

- a. Use COAC as a central hub for support and project opportunities, such as nest box trails and chimney swift boxes.
- b. Establish connections with local universities for projects and research.
- c. Collaborate with Master Gardeners and Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists to benefit birds, butterflies, and bees.
- d. Take a proactive approach and move away from bad news to **what we can do**.
- e. Build relationships with larger organizations and partners to take on larger projects with similar goals and interests.
- f. Work with watershed groups.
- g. Expand reach to land conservation groups. These relationships add to our ability to educate the public.
- h. We need to share our ideas with audiences that care about what we care about.
- i. Focus on bird-friendly plants (Conduct native plant sales, partner with native plant societies, seek help from National Audubon Society with these needs).
- j. Do more outreach with local Audubon chapters on community activities.

- k. Connect with Ohio Young Birders Club and Black Swamp Bird Observatory to promote leadership opportunities for young birders on field trips and spring bird walks.
- l. Focus on art and natural history to bring in fun and popular artists focused on natural history (attract speakers, get several chapters together, and conduct workshops).
- m. We need input from OYBC members (how to get more young birders and how to get them to lead other young birders).
- n. Stream events using the social media to reach more people and bring together chapters from all over Ohio in a virtual manner.
- o. Conduct interactive, hands-on presentations with local museums to identify specimens.

9. IDEA STATION REPORTS. The four facilitators reported out to the main group on the content that participants generated in their stations. Kurt and Tom presented a brief summary of the Idea Station concept and suggested possible steps forward.

- *Submitted by Tom Romito, Facilitator.*