

Code	902015
Subject	victor fazio
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Interviewer	julie west
Abstract	Victor Fazio of the Shaker Lakes Nature Center recalls his experiences at the Shaker Lakes beginning in the 1970s. Fazio, a bird-watching enthusiast, provides a wealth of information about the bird population at Shaker Lakes over roughly three decades, connecting ecological changes to changes in bird behavior and population. Also discussed is the history of "birding" at Shaker Lakes, which dates back "to at least 1905," emerging from the Conservation Movement of the early 20th century. Fazio credits his interest in bird-watching and environmental issues to his education at Shaker Heights High School, to the mentorship of ornithologist Jean Aiken, and to the community of naturalists in the region.

minutes:

- 902015A:
- 0 introduction and background
 - 1
 - 2 childhood experiences exploring the natural world
 - 3 birdwatching in Shaker Heights during 1975 "Indian Summer"
 - 4 "at the time, I had no idea that birdwatching was done by people [as a common hobby]"
 - 5 first bird identification
 - 6 "getting a little too friendly with the peacocks"
 - 7
 - 8 ninth grade biology class at woodbury junior high school, nature walks in southington park
 - 9
 - 10 early experiences as a Junior Naturalist at Shaker Lakes Nature Center
 - 11
 - 12
 - 13 "[floods repeatedly] rearranged whatever trails were in place", trail maintenance
 - 14
 - 15 making friends
 - 16
 - 17 Junior Naturalist activities
 - 18
 - 19 Nature Center funding for Cornell University ornithology class
 - 20
 - 21 selling birdseed to raise funds for the nature center
 - 22
 - 23 changes at Shaker Lakes, esp. during 1970s and 1980s
 - 24
 - 25 fewer bird sightings at northern tributary of horseshoe lake after gradual removal of vegetation
 - 26
 - 27
 - 28
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30 horseshoe lake damworks improvement leads to surprising biodiversification
31
32
33 draining lower lake, floods attract different species of birds
34
35
36 shoreline vegetation removal

37 "in the 70s we started to see some significant changes [in bird migration and population]"
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39
40 fewer and less diverse population of waterfowl
41
42
43 memorable sightings
44 physical and ecological changes
45
46
47 new mansions crowd out woodcock population
48
49 rare sighting: potted marijuana plants
50
51 boardwalk and sterns trail
52

902015B:

0 ecological changes

1 "my baseline is the late 70s. My baseline is wholly different from 30 years before that."
2 "maturation of forest" over decades led to current woodpecker population
3
4
5 fluctuations and locational variation in woodpecker population
6
7 Shaker Lakes as an historic public space
8
9
10 "birding in the shaker lakes has a very long history... going back to at least 1905"
11 Conservation movement, early 20th century
12
13 arrival of blue jays announced the Ides of March
14 shaker lakes in 1940s, end of historic American "heat cycle"
15
16
17 post-WWII garden clubs
18 changes in the late 1950s
19 "things are continually changing. There's gonna be winners and there's gonna be losers
in the process."
20 Jean Aiken, ornithologist and mentor

21 "I'm doing today precisely what I [always] wanted to do... I guess that impressed her."
22 "I was just a sponge. I couldn't get enough of it"

23
24 placing "nets" around the lakes
25
26
27 environmental studies class at shaker heights high school in late 1970s
28 according to student testing, e.coli counts were "off the charts"
29 Sloss Debate over best conservation strategies
30
31 relevance to Northeast Ohio/Emerald Necklace
32 "corridor" concept
33
34 "is shaker lakes a reasonable proxy of northeast Ohio's bird population?"
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37 other ornithological experiments and experiences
38
39 personal ornithological studies at shaker lakes
40 Ohio birding atlas
41
42
43 undergraduate thesis
44
45 "a really good year" for broad wing hawk-watching
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53 remembering friendships forged as a Junior Naturalist
54 reading the notes of ornithologist Will Russell
55 birding trip
56
57
58 "we didn't speak english. we talked in scientific names only"
59
60 birdwalk leader Perry Peskin was a positive role model
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64 influence of naturalists at shaker lakes on mr. fazio's ornithology career and philosophy
65
66
67 naturalists are on the "frontlines" of ornithology
68
69
70 end