



Ottawa County Emergency Management Agency  
315 Madison Street, Annex Basement  
Port Clinton, Ohio 43452-1936  
FRED PETERSEN, Director

Office: 419-734-6900  
Countywide: 800-788-8803  
Facsimile: 419-249-2361  
fpetersen@co.ottawa.oh.us

[www.co.ottawa.oh.us/ottawacoema](http://www.co.ottawa.oh.us/ottawacoema)

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Thursday March 26, 2020**

### **Biggest Week in American Birding Cancelled**

The Black Swamp Bird Observatory announced the Biggest Week in American Birding has been cancelled. The event was scheduled for May 8-17 and had been expected to draw thousands of people. The annual event has an economic impact of approximately \$40 million on the area.

Organizers said they would now focus on making the 2021 event even bigger and better than ever, and they pledged to go ahead this year if conditions become more normal by May. “In the event that our governor deems it safe to operate normally by May, Black Swamp Bird Observatory will do our best to provide meaningful birding experiences and offer as many services to birders as we possibly can,” said Kim Kaufman, Executive Director of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory. Next year's event is scheduled for May 7-16, 2021.

The state has closed the Magee Marsh Wildlife area and the Black Swamp Bird Observatory. BSBO is waiving the normal \$25 cancellation fee and will refund all of the fees paid by people who have registered so far.

Along with the State of Ohio hiring freeze, other Black Swamp Bird Observatory events that are also on hold at this time include the highway cleanup, spring banding demonstration and seasonal spring research.

For additional information on the Ottawa County response to COVID-19, please contact Fred Petersen, Ottawa County EMA, at 419-734-6900.

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