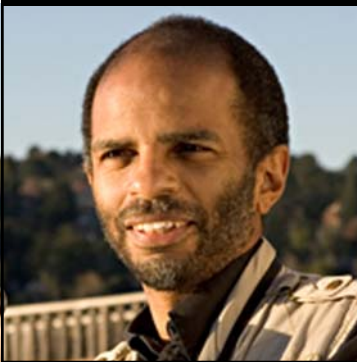


# A Conference on Diversity in Outdoor Recreation: The Many Faces of Conservation

Saturday, September 26, 2009, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Ward Pavilion, Wildwood Preserve, Toledo Metroparks



**John C. Robinson**



**Dudley Edmondson**



**Tamberly Conway**



**Maricruz Flores**

Anyone who has attended large gatherings of birders, or spent time at popular birdwatching sites, is likely to have noticed that the birding community tends to be fairly homogenous. We don't see many birders who are African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American, or members of other minority groups. This same lack of diversity has been noticed in many other aspects of outdoor recreation, from camping and hiking to nature study.

The board and staff of Black Swamp Bird Observatory believe that more diversity would be a good thing. As America becomes more ethnically diverse, the same thing will have to happen to birding and outdoor recreation if we're going to continue to have broad support for conservation. Therefore, we are proud to be co-sponsors of a one-day conference featuring people who are doing something about this issue.

Held at the Ward Pavilion at Wildwood Preserve, this conference will highlight practical approaches to the issue. The registration cost of \$40 includes a series of morning presentations by experts, a catered lunch, an early afternoon panel discussion involving community leaders, and a late afternoon field trip on the grounds of Wildwood Preserve. The conference is designed to be of particular value to two groups: those involved in nature education and outdoor recreation who wish to reach more diverse audiences; and those who are already communicating with diverse audiences and who wish to add more of an element of outdoor recreation and nature education. However, the event should also be of broad interest to teachers, youth group leaders, community leaders, interpretive naturalists, and others.

**Conference Fee: \$40 - Register on-line at [www.bsbobird.org](http://www.bsbobird.org) or call 419 898-4070**

## **Meet the Artist Reception, Friday, September 25, 6 to 8 p.m. National Center for Nature Photography, Secor Metropark**

Dudley Edmondson, one of the featured speakers, is also a renowned professional photographer. This free reception, sponsored by Toledo Metroparks and Black Swamp Bird Observatory, will give the public an opportunity to meet Dudley Edmondson and to view the opening of his digital exhibit, "Images Celebrating Wilderness, Wild Things, and the Human Spirit."

# Featured Presentations

## **John C. Robinson, "Birding for Everyone: Changing the Face of Environmental Conservation Through Birding"**

What happens when it is no longer just species or unique habitats, but environmental conservation itself, that is endangered? This is the concern raised by award-winning ornithologist and wildlife biologist John C. Robinson. In this presentation based on his latest book, *Birding for Everyone: Encouraging People of Color to Become Birdwatchers*, Robinson explains why minority involvement in environmental issues will become ever more vital to long-term conservation efforts and the preservation of our natural resources, and he explains the value of birding as an entry point for increasing environmental awareness.

## **Dudley Edmondson, "Outdoor Role Models: Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places"**

In his work as a professional nature photographer, Dudley Edmondson often found that he was the only African-American present at popular outdoor destinations. This experience led him to seek out others, interview them, and profile them in his book *Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places*. In this presentation, Edmondson will discuss what has caused the great divide between people of color, conservation stewardship, and outdoor recreation. His talk will include actual audio excerpts from those he interviewed, speaking of their experiences in the outdoors and why they feel that people of color are nearly absent from this landscape. These insights should lead to more understanding of the steps necessary to increase diversity in the outdoors.

## **Tamberly Conway and Maricruz Flores, "Latino Legacy: Improving Connections with Latino Audiences in Recreation, Outreach and Conservation Education Programming"**

The "Amigos del Bosque" (Friends of the Forest) program in Texas has had great success in reaching out to the Latino community. Looking toward the future of recreation management and outreach to diverse communities, Conway and Flores have identified the need to create clear pathways that will assist front-liners, educators and managers in efforts to improve communication that fosters tangible connections for Latino visitors in recreation-based settings. Information developed from research and field-based studies will provide participants with cultural content and associated activities that will help to improve communications and cultivate constituent development and networking with Latino communities.

## Featured Speakers

**John C. Robinson** has worked as a wildlife biologist and professional ornithologist for nearly 30 years, including stints at two federal conservation agencies: the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Currently he serves as President of On My Mountain, Inc., a birding and natural history tour company, and in that capacity he has led tours all over the world. Robinson is author of numerous books, including *Common Birds of Mount Diablo*, *Secret of the Snow Leopard*, and his consummate work, the comprehensive *North American Bird Reference Book CD-ROM*, for which he wrote not only the entire text but also all of the computer program code. An environmental advocate, he works with nonprofit organizations to increase minority interest in bird watching, in hopes that involvement will give people a reason to protect the environment through nature conservation in the future. His latest book, *Birding for Everyone*, is a particular reflection of this interest.

**Dudley Edmondson** has spent the last 19 years as a freelance photographer, capturing images of nature and wildlife subjects around North America. Many of his images have graced the pages of natural history publications around the world, from the U.S. to Europe and Australia. Recently his work has taken on a new dimension as he has added people to his regular list of subjects. Edmondson has found that his camera can serve as a tool for shaping public opinion. He is particularly interested in influencing the way that ethnically diverse people see themselves and the way the world sees them. To do so, he seeks out people of color who are engaged in a variety of activities and lifestyles, and brings those images into his portfolio. His recent book, *Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places*, celebrates diversity in outdoor recreation.

**Tamberly Conway** is the Conservation Education Coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service - National Forests and Grasslands in Texas. She has a B.S in Wildlife Management, a Master's degree in Forest Recreation Management and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Forestry with an emphasis in Human Dimensions in Natural Resources in the College of Forestry and Agriculture at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, TX. Her dissertation "Latino Legacy: Building Place-Based Connections of Youth through Family Experiences on Forest Lands" focuses on research, design, development and delivery of outreach and conservation education programming appropriate for Latino communities.

**Maricruz Flores** is employed as Partnership Development and Community Outreach Assistant Coordinator for the Latino Legacy community outreach program, funded by the U.S. Forest Service, in cooperation and collaboration with Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, TX, the Texas Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, among many others. Mari serves as a team leader and mentor for numerous "Amigos del Bosque" (Friends of the Forest) team members and acts as an inspirational role model to the Latino community. Mari's husband and five children are all dedicated volunteer members of the Latino Legacy "Amigos del Bosque" outreach team.

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