



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

OKC-AUDUBON.ORG

April, 2012

Prairie Dog Towns and the Animals that Use Them

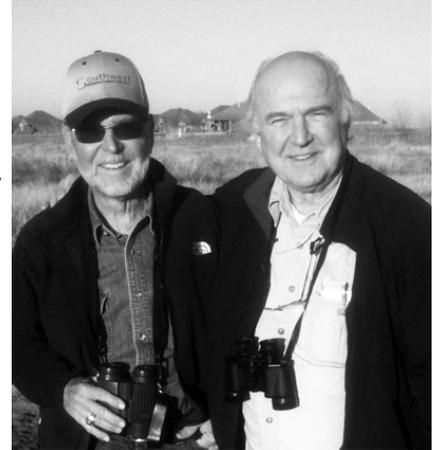
The prairie dog is a keystone species that supports many other animals. Dr. Jack Tyler and John Shackford have photographs of prairie dogs as well as many of the species that benefit from “dogtown” habitat. Dr. Tyler, Professor Emeritus of Zoology at Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma, received his Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma in 1967, based on his studies of the black-tailed prairie dog. He located and catalogued the prairie dog towns of Oklahoma and also researched the animals that use them—birds, reptiles, mammals. Twenty-two years later, in 1989, Jack and John completed a follow-up study for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation along the same lines as Tyler’s original research. Jack is the leading authority on prairie dogs in Oklahoma.

John Shackford graduated from Duke University in 1964 with a B.S. in Zoology. For many years he owned a business that gathered pollens for use by allergy clinics along with being a nationally published photographer. For the past 25 years John has done extensive research on several rare and endangered bird species found in northwestern Oklahoma, in addition to researching prairie dogs in Oklahoma. He believes his biggest contribution to biology was discovering that Mountain Plovers nest in cultivated fields, and that they do so in large numbers. This redirected much of the debate about declining Mountain Plover numbers into an entirely new area. In the early 1990s, through the Oklahoma Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Stillwater, Shackford did a range-wide survey of breeding Mountain Plovers on cultivated fields from Texas to Montana: One result was the discovery of significant numbers of Mountain Plovers on cultivated fields in southwestern Kansas and southwestern Nebraska, 2 states where the species had been believed to be extinct for several decades. John smiles with mirth when he notices that newer bird books now show this “range extension” eastward into Kansas and Nebraska.

Dr. Jack Tyler has authored many publications, including *The Mammals of Oklahoma* and checklists of birds of southwest Oklahoma. Jack is a veteran leader of multiple trips to tropical America to study birds and tropical ecology and for many years was the Wichita Mountains Christmas count coordinator. He is past-president of the Oklahoma Ornithological Society as well as having served masterfully as the OOS Bulletin editor after Dr. George M. Sutton’s retirement.

The prairie dog and dog towns are a fascinating piece of “Old West” history, and Oklahoma is in the middle of it. So come learn about a fascinating part of the state’s natural history.

Come out and bring a friend for a good evening of camaraderie and birds and great refreshments. Our meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, April 16, at the Will Rogers Garden Center, I-4 & NW 36th St. Visitors are always welcome.



FIELD TRIP SUMMARY: Tallgrass Preserve

By Mark Delgrosso

A success! Our primary goal during the March 16-18 weekend excursion to the Nature Conservancy’s Tallgrass Preserve was to view Greater Prairie-Chickens on their leks. This we did and even though the chickens we viewed were off the reservation they were active and within fairly close viewing range. It is a thrill to see these animals doing their thing – pinnae erect, air sacs bloated – strutting, squabbling.

Thanks to Jimmy Woodard’s contacts we had a personal guide to take us to the lek. Bonnie Gall was more than patient driving around the countryside showing our group not only the chickens but a pair of Barn Owls that had taken up residence in an abandoned farmhouse. Our thanks to her for all her efforts.

(continued on page 5)

President's Perspective

By Bill Diffin



At the end of last month's Perspective, we learned that the Broad-billed Sapayoa was the sole New World representative of the Eurylaimides, one of our ten passerine "superfamilies". We characterized the Sapayoa's foraging style as that of a sallying ambush predator. You can listen to the Sapayoa's simple trilled

vocalization in the sound clip at this link, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/broad-billed-sapayoa-sapayoa-aenigma>. How well does the Sapayoa represent its Eurylaimides brethren, mainly the broadbills (14 species) and pittas (30 species) of Asia and Africa? Let's go to <http://tolweb.org/Eurylaimides/67973> to see the photos in the banner. There is a Silver-breasted Broadbill on the left, an Indian Pitta in the middle, and a Dusky Broadbill on the right. Click on the Pittidae link at the top of the tree, and the new banner has photos of three more pittas, Hooded, Banded and Blue-winged (Pitta moluccensis). Return to the ToL Eurylaimides page and click on the Eurylaimus link to see the Banded Broadbill and the Black-and-yellow Broadbill. Watch and listen to a Blue-winged Pitta singing in the first video clip at <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/blue-winged-pitta-pitta-moluccensis>, and hear a Banded Broadbill singing in the first audio clip, if you're patient, at <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/banded-broadbill-eurylaimus-javanicus>. Finally hear the Black-and-yellow Broadbill in the first audio clip at <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/black-yellow-broadbill-eurylaimus-ochromalus>. The trilling of the Banded Broadbill resembles the Broad-billed Sapayoa. The Black-and-yellow Broadbill almost trills. In the simple whistles of the Blue-winged Pitta we can possibly see a similarity to the individual notes of the Sapayoa's trill. If we listen to a number of vocalizations of pittas and broadbills on the IBC site, we are likely to note the following: (1) most of the pittas have simple whistled vocalizations like the Blue-winged Pitta; and (2) broadbill vocalizations vary a lot from species to species and include simple whistles and nonmusical noises; trilling is not especially characteristic. The Broad-billed Sapayoa, as suggested by its name, resembles the broadbills in form and behavior (see the end of last month's article for behavior). The Sapayoa is dull in appearance unlike many of the broadbills and pittas which are beautifully colored. In answer to our question posed above, a live observation of a Sapayoa would give us some insight into the character of the broadbills, but it would not give a complete picture of the Eurylaimides because the pittas are so different.

Let's get started on another of our superfamilies -- go to <http://tolweb.org/Suboscines/26445>. Note that at the same rank as the Eurylaimides is the Tyrannides which

contains two of our "superfamilies", the Tyranni and the Furnarii. We will look at the Tyranni first, so click on that link. The Tyranni page has a small tree with four branches for four included families. The first family is the Pipridae (manakins), known for brilliantly colored males that engage in lekking courtship rituals. Typical foraging behavior is "quick aerial sallies from a perch to pluck fruits and seize insects (ref 1)". Three of the 48 species are resident as far north as southern Mexico: the Red-capped Manakin, see second video for moon-walking, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/red-capped-manakin-pipra-mentalis>; the Long-tailed Manakin, see second video for cartwheeling, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/long-tailed-manakin-chiroxiphia-linearis>; and the White-collared Manakin, see first video for calling, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/white-collared-manakin-manacus-candeil/male-singing>. The manakins are largely silent away from leks. Displaying males make simple vocalizations, and some species produce bizarre mechanical sounds with their wings. (ref 1) The second family is the Cotingidae (cotingas), 97 species which exhibit great diversity in form but are "united by structural characters such as skull and syrinx shape, toe structure, and tarsal scutellation (scaling on the lower legs), and behavioral features... Cotingas are arboreal. They are typically solitary or found in pairs or family groups ... generally quiet and perch in one spot for long periods. Fruit or insects may be plucked from branches or seized with the bill during sallies... Songs are given by males and cover an enormous range of simple sounds from loud, piercing squeaks, quacks and clangs, to deep booming groans or mooing, and resonant, clear whistles (ref 1)." Two cotingas range as far north as southern Mexico: the Lovely Cotinga, see photo, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/lovely-cotinga-cotinga-amabilis>; and the Rufous Piha, see photo and hear sound clip, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/rufous-piha-lipaugus-unirufus>. More on the Tyranni next month.

ref 1 - National Geographic Complete Birds of the World, edited by Tim Harris

Minutes of February 20, 2012 Meeting

President Bill Diffin called the meeting to order. Visitors Ash Hendricks, and Jack Tyler from Lawton were welcomed.

January minutes were approved as published in the February newsletter.

Nancy Vicars read the February treasurer's report.

Cash on hand 1/23/12	\$5,705.40
Deposits	+ 423.03
Disbursements	- 86.35
Cash On Hand 2/20/12	6,042.08

Nancy Vicars announced that the 2012 OKC Audubon Society yearly dues are \$15.00.

Committee Reports:

Dave Woodson, Conservation Chairman, warned that, if passed, HB 2607 will penalize persons who charge fees for showing others rare or endangered bird species with fines of \$100 to \$1,000 and/or a year of imprisonment. He urges everyone to write their representatives asking them to oppose this bill.

Sue Woodson, Refreshments Chairperson, requested volunteers for the refreshment sign up.

Terry Underhill passed a get well card for Jim Vicars for everyone to sign and mentioned that she had owl bumper stickers for sale for \$5.00 each.

Field Trips:

Bill Diffin reported that on March 3rd there will be a trip to Cyril, site of the Sia Comanche Eagle Facility. March 16th - 18th Tall Grass Prairie Preserve. Expect to see Greater Prairie Chicken leking and Henslow sparrows with Bonnie Gall.

New Business:

John Shackford reported that a Chipping sparrow was added to the CBC this past December, making the total number of species 120.

Kurt Meisenzahl says that the Acorn woodpecker is still being seen in the Wichita Mountains. Call him for an appointment.

Nealand Hill reports that the Allen hummingbird babies can be seen in the nest on the website probeallens.com. Also, the Suttencenter.org eagle cameras are showing the Sequoyah babies for a short time longer.

The night's speakers were Bob and Dana Holbrook who presented their trip to the Canary Islands where they each found their 400th bird of the Euro-Western Palearctic.

Cheryl Allen,
Substitute Recording Secretary
For NancyReed

Minutes of March 19, 2012 Meeting

President Bill Diffin called the meeting to order. Guest Kimberly Delgrosso was welcomed.

Nancy Vicars presented the Treasurer's report:

Cash on hand 2/20/2012	\$6,042.08
Deposits	267.90
Disbursements	<u>-95.35</u>
Cash on hand 3/19/2012	\$6,214.63

Committee Reports**Field trips**

Jimmy Woodard presented the upcoming April field trip to High Island, TX and June 2 club picnic.

Conservation Committee

Dave Woodson reported that HB 2607 has passed the

house & is in Senate committee. The provision penalizing persons who charge fees for showing endangered bird species has been removed from the bill.

New Business

Earthfest is scheduled for April 21 at Martin Nature Park. Volunteer sign -up sheet was passed.

3 Girl Scout troops are planning a garden project at Martin Nature Park. They are asking for \$80 in funding. Following discussion, Dave Woodson made a motion that \$80 be donated to this project. Nealand Hill amended the amount to \$100. Matt Jung seconded the motion. Motion carried by vote of 21 to 0.

Nealand Hill has 4 hats left for \$15 each.

Overholser/ Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge Clean-Up is scheduled for April 21. Sign up on-line to participate.

May 19 Garden Festival in the Park will be discussed at next month's meeting.

Marion Homier and John Cleal presented the program on wildlife seen on their trip to NewZealand.

Carla Brueggen,
Substitute Recording Secretary

Oklahoma City Audubon Society

Officers 2012

President	Bill Diffin	722-3778
Vice President	John Shackford	340-5057
Secretary	Nancy Reed	799-1116
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars	732-9885
Parliament	Ted Golden	354-3619
Programs	Warren Harden	364-3491
Recorder	Esther M. Key	381-9170
Conservation	Dave Woodson	601-622-3467
Field Trips	Jimmy Woodard	365-5685
Newsletter Editors:		
	Pat Velte	751-5263
	Carla Brueggen	495-3259
Publicity	Doug Eide	495-8192
Historian	Nealand Hill	388-6759
Refreshments	Sue Woodson	601-622-3467
Webmaster	Pat Velte	751-5263

The Oklahoma City Audubon society is neither a chapter of nor affiliated with National Audubon.

For Oklahoma City Audubon news between newsletters and meetings, be sure to log onto:

OKC-Audubon.org

Bird of the Month

By John Shackford



Owls are always fun. One reason the Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) is fun is because of its well-known call: "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you—ALL?!!!!," the ALL sounding very raucous. Once on a Christmas Bird Count long ago I was trying to squeak up a Barred Owl in one of the few areas in our count circle where I was pretty sure they were. It

was a cold, wintery morning, my "squeaker" was pretty frozen up and I ended up squeaking from underneath a bridge. I wasn't having any luck and was about to give up when I heard

"ALL?!!!!", not the whole call, just the raucous part, hollered back at me. Unknown to me the owl had flown in and perched on the top of a very close telephone pole. The bird was perhaps 20 feet away from me, just out of my line of sight from under the bridge. It definitely made an impression on me, and woke me up quite effectively.

In Oklahoma, the Barred Owl is found over most of the eastern 2/3rds of the main body of the state, getting rarer and rarer from east to west. I once found them calling in an extensive woodlot about ¼ mile inside the Oklahoma Panhandle, in Beaver County. Never got the record on the books, but they can probably still be found there. If anybody wants to check it out, go about 6.5 miles straight west of Laverne, Oklahoma, and just past the section correction curve in the road you will see the extensive woodlot on both sides of the road (halfway through the section correction curve you enter the Panhandle). I know of no other Panhandle reports for the Barred Owl.

Certain birds of prey inhabit similar habitat but hunt them at different times of day and night. The Barred Owl and the Red-shouldered Hawk both inhabit swampland and bottomland over much of the eastern U.S. But the Barred Owl is not strictly a hunter at night—at least on occasion it *will* hunt in daytime. A.C.

Bent (1961, Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey, part 2) said that "the prevailing impression that owls cannot see in daylight is erroneous. The eyesight of the barred owl is particularly keen." One bit of evidence to support keen eyesight during the day was given by Frank Bolles (1890, Barred owls in captivity, Auk, vol.7, pp 101-114), who often left 1 of his 2 captive Barred Owls perched in the sunlight outside; he noted that the owl "was keenly alive to anything passing skyward," even if it was very far way: during 1 particular day, by following where the owl was looking, Bolles located 334 hawks.

A.K. Fisher (1893, The hawks and owls of the United States in their relation to agriculture, U.S. Dept. Agr., Div. Orn. and Mamm, Bull. 3) examined the stomachs of 109 Barred Owls and 220 stomachs of Red-shouldered Hawks. He found that both of them eat virtually the same things, such as mice (mostly), other mammals, birds, frogs, insects, spiders, crayfish, and on rare occasions, poultry. The size of the bird species the Barred Owl will prey upon is usually up to Flicker-sized, but Gallinules, grouse and chickens have been taken. Fisher's stomach analyses were done before 1900, in an era when I suspect the prevailing attitude was that the only good hawk or owl was a dead one. Such sentiments were common until around the 1950s. Public understanding of the role such predators play in the environment has come a long way in the last 60 years.



Bent (1961) said that he considered the Barred Owl "a very gentle bird for a raptor. I have never had one even threaten to attack me, even when I was handling the young," he said, but other researchers have found the adults to be much more aggressive at the nest. Then there is the case of the closely-related Spotted Owl, found in the western U.S. and classified as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. One of the more serious threats to the Spotted Owl is the Barred Owl with which the Spotted Owl sometimes interbreeds. But more importantly, perhaps, the Barred Owl is the more aggressive of the 2 owls, and the Spotted Owls just move out of their habitat as Barred Owls move in. One very obvious field mark difference between the two owls is that the Barred Owl has horizontal barring on the upper breast and vertical barring on the belly and flanks, while the Spotted Owl has only horizontal barring on the breast, belly and flanks.

OKC AUDUBON SOCIETY Financial Report for 2011

CASH ON HAND 12/31/2010 **\$5,558.51**

INCOME:

Membership dues	909.64
Checking Acct. interest	18.38
Calendar sales	120.04
Donations	5.00
Memorials for Eric Enwall	485.00
2010 CBC participants	<u>150.04</u>
	1,699.16

EXPENSES:

Meeting room rent	200.00
Newsletter (copies & postage)	961.45
Club Promotion	27.90
2010 Xmas count	230.00
Memb. dues (Garden Council)	15.00
Summer Social	189.85
Speaker Honorarium	<u>25.00</u>
	1,649.20

CASH ON HAND 12/31/2011 **\$5,608.47**

Tall Grass Prairie (cont.)

We also met up with Torre Hovick, a PhD candidate working on the chickens. He was gracious enough to take some



time out to talk with our group and point out some other lek locations (which time and terrain did not permit us to explore). He and his research assistant also described their research methods which involves capturing (live!) and radio collaring the Prairie-Chickens, particularly the females. Their capture method involves setting up wire barricades that 'funnel' the birds into a terminal cage.

Asking if a food bait was involved I was surprised to learn that curiosity was what apparently urged them on. The grouse family, of which the Prairie-Chickens are members, are certainly not known for their wits (think of the ease with which Spruce Grouse have classically met their end).



Other highlights were near 100 Golden Plovers, several Rough-legged Hawks, multiple Northern Harriers, a Le-Conte's Sparrow nearly underfoot, Bald Eagles both in flight *and* on a nest, and several duck species. At least everyone (minus Jimmy!) got a lifer or two on this trip. For everyone but Jimmy the Greater Prairie-



Welcome!

The Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes new member Lisa Bewley of Edmond.

Dues Notice

It's time once again to renew your annual membership for 2012. OCAS dues are \$15 per household and may be paid at the monthly meetings, online at our website <http://www.okc-audubon.org> or mailed to Nancy Vicars, Treasurer, 820 Arthur Drive, Midwest City, OK 73110

Cookie Patrol

Refreshments for the April meeting will be provided by these volunteers:

Mary Jo Fisher

Jana Mott

Mark Delgrosso



Recorders Report – March 2012

Spring has Sprung

Avian spring migration seems to be on its normal time schedule even though this may be the 3rd warmest winter and the 10th wettest March on record causing plants to bloom on an earlier schedule. The last frost was on March 4th with patches of frost on the 9th, and three main rain events added up to an official 5.72 inches which is above the official average of 3.06 inches. This finally ends the drought for central Oklahoma although parts of western Oklahoma are still affected. Many winter birds remain and newly arriving migratory bird reports started out slowly but escalated by the end of the month. There are so many to discover. Where and when will you see your first?

On the 2nd at Martin Park Nature Center James Hubbell spotted a **Marsh Wren**. On the 3rd Tim O'Connell got a call from Susan Walker advising she saw a SNOWY OWL on the east side of Stillwater around noon, the last reported sighting of this exciting winter bird. On the 5th Todd Fellenbaum discovered a **Snow Goose** near downtown Oklahoma City.

On the 10th Jimmy Woodard had four Purple Martins fly over his yard in Mustang. In Mark Cromwell's yard the Purple Martins were greeted by a Sharp-shinned Hawk which was scared away by his wife. Steve and Mary Davis drove around Lake Hefner and located Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Hooded Mergansers, Red-breasted Mergansers, Western Grebe, Common Loon, and Bonaparte's Gull. Bill Diffin also discovered a Thayer's Gull and at Bluff Creek Park a Spotted Towhee and Fox Sparrow,

On the 16th Jennifer Kidney heard **Fish Crows** and found an **Eastern Towhee** along South Jenkins in Norman and the next day a magnificent adult Bald Eagle sailed over her yard--only the second time in 25 years that she had one as a "yard bird"! On the 17th Joe Grzybowski located **Tree Swallows** along South Jenkins. On the 20th at Rose Lake Mary and Steve Davis discovered **Blue-winged Teal** and at Morgan Road and 50th a **Cinnamon Teal** which was located again by Jim Bates at Rose Lake. At Lake Carl Blackwell Cassandra Cullin spotted a **Pine Warbler** along the Blue Trail.

March 21st Lindell Dillon observed a **Lark Sparrow** in Norman's Hallbrooke Addition. On the 22nd Steve and Mary found the first **Great Egrets** on the concrete 'spillway' at the NE end of Lake Overholser. On the 23rd Matt Jung located two Cinnamon Teal at Morgan Road and 50th Street, and before going to work James Hubbell noticed two Fish Crows being chased by two American Crows at Lake Hefner. In Norman Jennifer had a Brown Thrasher checking out the back yard, and Susanne Lutze greeted a Great Egret on her little lake in Tuttle.

On the 24th Pat Velte verifies there are still many Common Loons on Lake Hefner and several have almost completed the molt into breeding plumage, plus a Red-throated Loon is also molting. At Lake Overholser Joe Grzybowski located an **Eared Grebe** and at Rose Lake Greater and **Lesser Yellowlegs**. Dick Gunn announced that along South Jenkins for the fourth straight year, the **Yellow-throated Warbler** is in Half-Mile Woods. In point of fact, Anais Starr and Jennifer Kidney spotted it first, but he beat them to the computer. On the 25th Dick observed a **Solitary Sandpiper** along South Jenkins.

On the 27th Joe was returning from south of the Red River, looped over to the Goldsby sod farms, was pleasantly treated to a group of 67 **American Golden Plovers**, almost 100 American Pipits, a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, and in Norman a **Little Blue Heron**. Along South Jenkins Cecil Johnson, Chase Swyden, Dick and later Jennifer saw a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, and on the 28th Dick reports the first migrating Snowy Egret in the Canadian River. Matt Jung noticed the Great Egrets have arrived at the nesting colony on NW10th and Council. On the 29th Jennifer had South Jenkins pretty much to herself and found a few really good sightings including a **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Northern Rough-winged Swallow**, **Vesper Sparrows**, and a calling **Willow Flycatcher**. Near Guthrie Garey Harritt found a few **Cliff Swallows** at the bridge.

On the 30th Alicia Riddle saw a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** at her honeysuckle near Arcadia. While Dave and Sue Woodson were driving through the Arcadia Campground they located a **Black-and-White Warbler** and Red-headed Woodpecker. Brian Davis heard a **Yellow Warbler** singing in his central Norman neighborhood. Dave Durica noticed a pair of **Yellow-crowned Night Herons** in the old section of Brookhaven in Norman, and it appears they are setting up housekeeping. Other Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were seen on the 29th by C J in Norman and on the 31st in Moore by Patti Muzny.

Diana Landoll has been banding Scissor-tailed Flycatchers on both legs. One leg will have an aluminum band and a color band and the other leg two color bands in different arrangements. Photos of banded legs would be greatly appreciated. However, the birds like to sit on their legs and sometimes all you can notice is a band. Even this partial information is greatly appreciated. So if you locate a banded bird, please note the color and arrangement on each leg, where the bird was located and advise her at dvl04@hotmail.com .

During March **119** bird species were reported with **27** new species which increased the year's total to **167** species in the Central Oklahoma area. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds by turning in reports and can be contacted by e-mail at emkok@earthlink.net.
Esther M. Key, Editor.

Conservation

By Dave Woodson



Big Bird Beware! Electrocutions kill tens of thousands of birds per year -- Frequent victims include the Bald Eagle in Alaska, Golden Eagle in the West, Harris's hawk in the Southwest, and Norma, Oklahoma's Red-tailed Hawk.

Power lines and poles may serve as handy perches for birds, but they also present potential electrocution hazards. Raptors are threatened more than many of the smaller birds we often see perched on power line. The danger comes when a bird can span the gap between two electrical lines completing the deadly circuit. This may happen when they land or take off from poles or come in contact with un-insulated transformers. Electrocution is primarily a problem of large raptors in open habitat, particularly treeless areas.

Sibley lists "Causes of bird mortality" in four categories: Collisions, Poisoning, Predation and Diseases. Electrocutions is a small part of the total number, but 'the relatively small number of birds affected belies the significance of this threat.' Sibley does point to a study by HawkWatch International that revealed 'an electrocution rate of just under 1 bird per 100 poles per year, or 547 birds at 74,000 poles in Utah in 2001-2002. About 10% of the birds killed were Golden Eagles, 34% Ravens, and another 25% Buteos (Red-tailed, Swainson's and Ferruginous Hawks.'

The Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) members include the utility industry, U.S. fish and wildlife service, state wildlife resource agencies, conservation groups, and manufacturers of avian protection products that work together to understand the causes of bird/ power line electrocutions and collisions and to develop ways of preventing bird mortalities and associated power outages. The APLIC has published "Avian Protection Plan Guidelines" that details causes and methods to prevent large bird electrocutions and recommends, among other things, that utilities place covers on transformers, wires, and jumper wires, and build perches for raptors on poles away from live power lines. One simple design recommendation is to space power lines 36" line vertically and 60" horizontally thus reducing the chance of contact by large birds. OG&E is a member of the APLIC but at this time it is not known if they fully abide by the Avian Protection Plan Guidelines.

What Can We Do?

- The "Avian Protection Plan Guidelines" are voluntary; urge your utility provider to join the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee and adopt these measures.
- Be aware of possible hazardous power lines/ connections in your area and watch if raptors perch on them.

Question of the month: "What to do if you find an injured Bird?"

TOP 25 : HOOPOE (*Upupa epops*)

By Mark Delgrosso

FAMILY: Upupidae

RANGE: most of Europe, Africa, Madagascar, and most all of sub-Siberian Asia

HABITAT: likes open situations with some trees, even frequents the outskirts of towns, farmland, gardens/ parks

STATUS: common

The Hoopoe is a bird to make one smile, maybe even giggle. It is a bird that borders on ridiculous but at the same time oozes charm. Even its names (both familiar and scientific) are amusing. It would make one want to become a birder, I think. This amazing-looking bird is actually both widespread and common. Found on 3 continents and Madagascar (though some authorities have split the respective populations into several species) one does not have to beat too many bushes to see one – and how could you *not* want to see one. It can hardly be described – an ibis? a woodpecker? a *zebra*?! And the hairdo!



The Hoopoe is a popular bird. It has been elevated to the status of *national* bird in Israel and the official bird of a state of India. It has found its way into the coat-of-arms of several municipalities and institutions. It's a *fun* bird with funny names – all of which are onomatopoeic - based on its almost cuckoo-like 'hoop hoop hoop' call.

Their long, ibis-y bill is adept at probing for worms and insects in soil (making it Kiwi-like in that respect). They can also use it for prying and picking the same prey from fissures and cracks in trees. They are known also for their fluttery, erratic flight patterns reminiscent of a huge moth or butterfly. This may be a means of evading aerial predators. The sexes are alike in their unique and outstanding plumage.

Birds in the northern regions will migrate down and join their tropical brethren for the winter months. There are some slight but noticeable differences in the plumage patterns of these different populations leading some to the conclusion that they're different *species*. The resident form on Madagascar also has an atypical song, sounding more like a *purr* than a *hoop*. Nevertheless, whether there's one or several Hoopoe species the bird is different enough from all other birds to merit its own family – Upupidae.

Oklahoma City Audubon Society
c/o Carla Brueggen
8010 NW 32
Bethany, OK 73008

Upcoming Field Trips

April 21 "EARTHFEST" at Martin Park. Setup begins at 9am, Saturday Apr 21 -- the festival runs from 10am to 2pm.

APRIL 26 thru MAY 2 Lesser Prairie Chicken Festival in Woodward This will be the 4th year for this popular bird festival run by TAS and the Oklahoma Audubon Council. Several satellite trips to Hackberry, Wichita Mtns and Black Mesa are run in conjunction with the festival. Contact John Kennington at johnkennington@gmail.com or visit the festival website at www.lektreks.org.

MAY 11-13 OOS Spring Meeting Camp Egan, east of Tahlequah. Visit www.okbirds.com for more info.

JUNE 2 CLUB PICNIC June 2 at Lake Stanley Draper. Details to be announced.

---PLEASE RSVP to the trip leaders so we will know you are coming. Bring appropriate items for the weather and conditions. Take snacks and drinks as trips may be out for an extended time with no access to amenities.

A possible Conservation Field trip to ...

WildCare Foundation Facility located has an open invitation to a **Baby Shower**

When: April 28th, 2012 from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Where: 7601 84th Street, Noble, OK Phone No.: 405.872.9338

Thousands of wild orphans arrive at WildCare each year, and each precious baby needs a warm bed, healthy food, and a stimulating place to grow up strong and wild. WildCare meets all their needs with support from caring people like you! Come meet the little ones before they are released back to nature!

- This is a unique opportunity to tour the entire WildCare Facility
- This is an outside event so dress for the weather
- For your pets safety please leave them at home

You are welcome to invite your friends, family, and co-workers! Link: <http://www.wildcareoklahoma.org/>
