



# Oklahoma City Audubon Society

OKC-AUDUBON.ORG

September 2012

## Improving Grassland Bird Habitat

Our guest presenter at the September 17 meeting of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society will be Torre Hovick speaking on "Restoring Ecological Processes to Improve Grassland Bird Habitat." This topic will cover fire-grazing interaction in general citing specific cases of prairie birds from his research in Oklahoma and Iowa.

Mr. Hovick is a Graduate Research Assistant in Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Oklahoma State University. He was born in central Iowa and grew-up hunting and fishing with dad. Torre became interested in birds at a young age — got his first bird feeder in 3rd grade — but never became an active "birder" until doing Master's work at Iowa State. He took a trip to Costa Rica and was hooked after that. During his undergraduate at the University of Northern Iowa he met his wife, now of three years, and they have a 6-month-old daughter, Avery.



After earning his doctorate, Torre hopes to work at a land-grant university in a position that continues to allow him to do research with a small teaching load. He loves grasslands but really all wild areas are exciting to him. Birding in new places is one of his favorite pastimes along with photography.

Come out and bring a friend for a great evening with birds and birders (and great refreshments). Our meetings are held September through June on the third Monday of each month. They begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Will Rogers Garden Center, I-44 and NW 36th Street. Visitors are always welcome.

## Upcoming Field Trips

(For a complete list and regular updates visit [okc-audubon.org](http://okc-audubon.org))

### **September 23: Backyard Birdwatching**

Bird the pond and watercourse in Mark Delgrosso's NW Oklahoma City neighborhood and then a visit to nearby Martin Park Nature Center. If weather permits, the area is great for a spread-blanket picnic as well. Meet at 9am at the Vondel Smith mortuary on MacArthur between Memorial and 122nd. Leader: Mark Delgrosso, 470-453-4533 or [medelgrosso@gmail.com](mailto:medelgrosso@gmail.com)

### **October 5 – 7: Bioblitz at Foss Lake**

### **October 13-14: Chickasaw Nat'l Recreation Area**

Spend the day or make it a weekend at one of the park's campgrounds or local inns/hotels. For more information on the area go to <http://www.sulphurokla.com>  
Leader: Mark Delgrosso ([medelgrosso@gmail.com](mailto:medelgrosso@gmail.com) or 470.4533.

## New Members

The Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes new members: Valerie Bradshaw, Oklahoma City and Dennis Gettman, Yukon.

## Cookie Patrol

Refreshments for September 17 meeting will be provided by: Ariane Hyatt, Nancy Vicars, and Jeanette Schoof.

A volunteer is needed to do the coffee and drinks for the October 15th meeting when Sue and Dave Woodson will be out of town. Please contact refreshment chairperson Sue Woodson if you are willing.

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# President's Perspective

By Bill Diffin



Welcome back everyone. The fall migration season is well under way. Hopefully you have been able to get out and bird since it cooled off last weekend. Fall and winter are great times to bird in Oklahoma -- fewer bugs, less leafy cover, mild temperatures most of the time and lots of interesting migrants and winter residents. Let the fun begin!

In June's Perspective we completed a look at the Furnarii, the last of the three superfamilies we defined on the suboscine side of the passerine tree. This month begins a look at the groups we defined on the other side of the passerine tree, the oscine side, commonly called the songbirds. At the base of the oscine side is a collection we named Basal Songbird Australasian Group, abbreviated BSAG. The ToL web page which shows the oscines is at <http://www.tolweb.org/Oscines/29222>. BSAG is the series of taxa from scrub-birds to berrypeckers, nine families and one superfamily, everything shown except for Corvoidea and Passerida. True to the "Australasian" in their name, the BSAG birds reside almost entirely in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, New Guinea and the nearby islands. The theme of this series of articles is: leveraging our knowledge of local passerines into an understanding of the passerines worldwide. So one might ask, why are we starting our investigation of the songbirds with BSAG, all the members of which live about as far from US as they could? The answer has to do with their basal position in the songbird tree. They are the most distantly related songbirds to the groups we see locally like warblers, sparrows, blackbirds, thrushes, jays and crows. So it won't be surprising if the members of BSAG look or behave oddly compared to what we are used to. Such differences will be noted with interest, but what we are really after here are the similarities between BSAG birds and our local songbirds. Any similarities might be common characters of the entire songbird group. Such common characters are a double-edged sword. They serve to separate the songbirds from the other birds and are therefore a tool which might be useful in the earliest stage of identification of an unknown sighting. However a character which is widespread throughout the songbird tree can't be used to distinguish any one branch from the others.

On the most basal branch of the songbird tree are the lyrebirds, the family *Menuridae*. The family has only two species, the Superb Lyrebird and the Albert's Lyrebird, both restricted to parts of Australia. Two very nice videos of Superb Lyrebirds singing can be seen at the links <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/superb-lyrebird-menura-novaehollandiae/male-singing> and <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/superb-lyrebird-menura-novaehollandiae/male-bird-mimicking-number-other-birds-including-kookab>. The vocal

flexibility exhibited is the signature of the songbirds and distinct from the suboscines. Young male lyrebirds learn songs from mature males as well as being excellent mimics of other birds and sounds in the environment (ref Wikipedia article, Lyrebird). They are famous for confusing people with imitations of odd sounds like camera clicks, chainsaws, barking dogs and car engines. In contrast to songbirds, suboscines have unvarying vocalizations which are hard-wired behaviors -- at the appropriate time in the maturation of a male suboscine, it will begin to sing the characteristic song of its species even if it has never heard it. Male lyrebirds sing and dance in courtship displays conducted on open arenas secluded in brushy habitats. There is a short video of a displaying male lyrebird at this link <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/superb-lyrebird-menura-novaehollandiae/male-bird-singing-displaying>. Lyrebirds eat worms, insects and other arthropods, usually uncovered by scratching through leaf-litter on the ground. The territory a male defends includes several nesting females, possibly as many as eight. A female builds a nest, lays a single egg, broods it and raises the youngster without assistance from the male. In comparison to other songbirds, lyrebirds are slow to mature and live a long time. Female lyrebirds start breeding when five or six years old, males at six to eight. They may live for 30 years. We will look at some other members of BSAG in next month's Perspective.

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## Oklahoma City Audubon Society

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*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



I love hearing the **Upland Sandpipers** (*Bartramia longicauda*) calling as they fly overhead at night in fall and spring: Oodle-oo (3 syllables) is what it sounds like to me, although it appears some ornithologists show this call with 4 syllables. The night time calls are a pleasant reminder that birds are on the move and the seasons are changing. In the fall, these birds

arrive from the north “from June 30 to October 25,” according to Sutton (Oklahoma Birds, 1967).

I spent a memorable half hour one spring looking into a field less than a quarter mile east of Rose Lake, in Canadian County. I found a flock of Upland Sandpipers some distance away from the road, far enough away to need a scope to check them out reasonably well. As I was scanning through the group, I saw a brown bird with a definitely decurved bill. This raised the possibility of an extremely rare look at an Eskimo Curlew, a bird believed to be on the brink of extinction at the time. But if any existed, central Oklahoma would be a credible place to see one during migration. I worked and worked to determine definitely whether it was a curlew or an Upland Sandpiper with a decurved bill. Finally I was able to conclude that it was an Upland Sandpiper with a deformed, but very symmetrically curved, bill. Such are the vagaries of bird identification.

Bent (1927, *Life Histories of North American Shore Birds*) said that “extensive shooting for the market, where it was much in demand, reduced its numbers to an alarmingly low ebb.” Dr. Thomas S. Roberts (1919, *Water Birds of Minnesota Past and Present*), as quoted in Bent, said that in Minnesota “fifty years

ago it was present all through the summer, everywhere in open country, in countless thousands. Now [1919] it is near extinction.” Fortunately numbers have rebounded so that now they are fairly common migrants in central Oklahoma where we see them in fields or hear them call overhead.

The breeding grounds of the Upland Sandpiper are found in the northern half of the United States from the east coast west to northern Oklahoma and most of Kansas, then northwestward to Alaska. Upland Sandpipers that regularly breed in Oklahoma are usually found in the northeastern part of the state. It is one of the special birds to be found nesting among the grasses of The Nature Conservancy’s Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. Nesting birds usually lay 4 eggs.

Dr. Elliott Coues (1874, *Birds of the North-West*), as reported in Bent (1927) tells of an instance of remarkable bravery of a parent Upland Sandpiper in defense of a young chick he had caught. “I never saw a braver defense attempted than was made by this



strong-hearted though powerless bird, who, after exhausting her artifices to draw me in pursuit of herself, by tumbling about as if desperately wounded, and lying panting with outstretched wings on the grass, gave up hope of saving her young in this way, and then almost attacked me, dashing close up and retreating again to renew her useless onslaught.” What a difference from the quiet, reserved migrants we normally see in our Oklahoma fields.

These sandpipers winter on the pampas of South

America, which are found on the lower east side of the continent, in southern Brazil, most of Uruguay, and northeastern provinces of Argentina. From these pampas the Upland Sandpipers head northward, reaching Oklahoma in the spring, according to Sutton (1967) “from March 21 to late May.” The total flight distance between winter grounds and breeding grounds for many of these birds is some 7000 miles.

# Chirpings

September 2012

By Patti Muzny

Once again the effects of another hot, dry summer made for curtailed birding activities for me. I'm not a fan of hot weather and I don't think the birds are as well. For most of June through the end of August, we didn't get to visit our Byars property. Rain in that area came 2-3 times and the pasture and trees did not appear to suffer too much, but there was no runoff to fill our pond, so it's very low. We did not get enough rain throughout last winter and spring so we went into the hot summer with the water level extremely low and it only got worse.



In mid-August we did make a quick trip to check on the property and we found a pair of Solitary Sandpipers enjoying the low water. They are rather entertaining to watch and relatively tame. Not much else was stirring, including me!



As always, the Mississippi Kites that nest in our neighborhood are interesting to watch as they patrol the space above our back yard. Their calls make me smile. Our Eastern Bluebirds nested twice in the front yard and I think they actually fledged at least two offspring. We had a Great Crested Flycatcher nest nearby and raised a few Chickadees and Bewick's Wrens. The Cooper's Hawk is still a presence and has nested across the street again. It spent a lot of time zipping from its nest tree, across our back yard and into the pecan trees in back. From there it created much anxiety and scolding from the Mockingbirds. A summer visit by a brilliant male American Goldfinch was a welcome surprise. There seem to be many Eurasian Collared Doves and Mourning Doves in the area, but no White-winged Doves. For several evenings back in June, a Night Heron (Yellow-crowned, I think) came to roost in the pecan trees. That was a first.

In the past week or so, I've seen several Brown Thrashers visiting the birdbaths, along with Mockingbirds, Robins and Blue Jays and of course the House sparrows. I finally saw

a hummingbird in the yard about three weeks ago. I was sitting on the patio with my morning coffee when I noticed the hummer feeding from the flowers of a bat-face culpea plant I had moved to the edge of the patio. I am not always able to find this plant each year, but it's been easy to grow if it's kept watered thoroughly and hummingbirds do seem to like it. It became a little stressed when we had our 110+ days and I moved it out of full sun and it perked up again.

The Barn Swallows that nest on the sides of the Capitol Building were quite successful in fledging several broods. One July morning I was walking up the stairs on the north side of the building when I noticed dozens of young Barn Swallows lined up on those historic windowsills in the shade. They were swiveling their delightful little necks back and forth and up and down while following the parent birds flight patterns and begging. There was much chirping, stuffing and wing-flapping going on. I really enjoyed it from the cool of the building.

It's now early September and we are so looking forward to some cooler weather that will persuade me out and into my beloved woods once again.

## Top 25: Tufted Jay

by Mark Delgrosso

**FAMILY:** *Corvidae*

**RANGE:** *Mexico only (in the Sierra Madre Occidental range within the states of Nayarit, Durango, Sinaloa)*

**HABITAT:** *evergreen or evergreen/oak forests*

**STATUS:** *within range and habitat common but considered near-threatened globally because of its tiny geographical range*

Jays may be loud, aggressive, obnoxious. They may steal and bully, possibly even murder. And they don't sing great, either. However true these generalizations may be one thing is sure – most of the world's jays are nice to look at. I think our



quodidian Blue Jay is among the most colorful of our birds. And then there's the Green Jay which just reaches our borders from its home range of Mexico.

(continued on page 6)

# Honeymoon Birding, Pt. 1

By Jimmy Woodard

Nadine Varner and I were married on Saturday, May 19th, at her mother's house in Welling just east of Tahlequah. We left on our honeymoon on Monday morning the 21st, flying from OKC early and arrived in Sacramento about 1:30PM PDT. After getting the rental car, we headed north on I-5 and made it to Chico about 4:30. This would be our base for the next three days.

Tuesday morning the 22nd, we met up with Scott Huber, a local birding guide. Scott had been one of our guides during the 2008 Alaska trip and he fondly remembers that trip full of 14 Okie birders as perhaps his best guided trip ever. He took us to the Chico WWTP where we found several Yellow-billed Magpies and Oak Titmouse in orchards nearby. The waste treatment plant had lots of trails and was very birdy. We saw lots of waterfowl and grebes, Marsh Wrens, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, American Bittern, Virginia Rail, and a few egrets and herons. We drove up into Upper Bidwell Canyon just outside of town. It was a beautiful canyon with gently rolling grassy hills and a stream lined with trees. We quickly added California Quail, Willow and Ash-throated Flycatchers, White-tailed Kite, and Purple Finch. In several wet seeps, Scott called up the local specialty: Black Rails! We heard several birds giving their grunts and growling calls. One time, the bird was literally at my feet but we could never see them! This wet, grassy seep in the upland canyon was not a place I'd ever expect to find Black Rail!

Next, we headed east of town on Hwy 32 along the spine of a ridge. A stop at an old road grade produced Wrentit and our only looks at California Thrasher on the trip. Further along, we descended the wooded slopes down into the valley into the 4000 acre Chico Ecological Preserve which Scott helps manage. We had Hutton's Vireo, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Anna's Hummer, Black-headed Grosbeak, and several California Quail. We then drove up into the foothill low mountains. Several stops got us views of Nashville Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Hammond's Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo (which sound so different than back home), and Mountain Quail.

Just before sundown, we stopped at Scott's house. We heard a Northern Pygmy Owl calling below us. Scott thought he knew where the bird might be and after a short hike we found the bird being mobbed by several

other birds. It gave us a few wicked stares before moving on in the fading light.



Wednesday the 23rd, we joined forces with Scott again for a trip near the Nevada border. Near Chilcott, we scanned the dry, rocky slopes hoping for Chukar but had no luck on this day. Down in the valley, we had several Sage Thrashers and Brewer's Sparrows in the sagebrush. We also had Burrowing Owl, Golden Eagle and a Barn Owl briefly peering out of a nest box. In a wetland area in the valley, we had White-faced Ibis, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and several species of ducks. A check at an old homestead in a lovely meadow found Pygmy Nuthatch and Mountain Bluebird.

Up in the mountains at Yuba Pass where it was cool with some snow on the ground, we found Red-breasted Sapsuckers, White-headed Woodpecker, and Evening Grosbeaks. A stop at Salmon Lake gave us a great look at a male

Black-backed Woodpecker. This bird had been reported in this area in previous years but we got the first sighting for this year according to Scott. A stop at Basset's Store produced a couple of male Calliope Hummers and ice cream to celebrate Nadine's lifer! On the way back to Chico, we again stopped at Scott's property. He was able to call up two Western Screech Owls to cap the day!

On Thursday the 24th, after two intense days of birding, we took on a more relaxed pace. Nadine and I went to Sacramento and toured the zoo. Relative to OKC's zoo, it was small, but it was an interesting place. Our zoo tour only took two hours but we enjoyed it. We even got to see a Harris' Hawk fly over the audience during a short animal show.

The drive to San Francisco was uneventful. Thankfully, the mid-afternoon traffic was light and flowed fairly smoothly. We soaked up the incredible views of the city and the bay as we crossed over into this famous place over the Bay Bridge. Alcatraz and the Golden Gate Bridge were visible in the distance as well as a nice look of the city's skyline. We made our hotel in south SF near the airport about 3PM. A brief power nap got us refreshed and out the door. We drove up to nearby San Bruno Mountain.

Friday morning, we went over near the coast to Lake Merced. This was a series of lakes surrounded by walking trails and parks. We had a nice mix of birds including Surf Scoter, Double-crested Cormorant, Western Gull, Marsh Wren, Green Heron, swallows, Brewer's Blackbird, and an Allen's Hummer doing a breeding flight display.

We visited the SF Zoo at 10AM. This is one of the nicest zoos I've seen. My favorite exhibit was the penguin pond. We watched the keepers feeding the many penguins fish both with and without medicine in them.

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## Minutes of the June 18, 2012 Meeting

The meeting was opened by **President Bill Diffin** at 7:10 PM. The minutes of the May, 2012 meeting were approved as published in the newsletter. **Treasurer Nancy Vicars** presented the treasurer's report, which was approved as presented. There is a Cash on Hand balance of \$6,273.15. Field Trip Committee chairman **Jimmy Woodard** reported on the success of the annual picnic and nightjar walk held June 9th at Lake Stanley Draper. Jimmy asked for suggestions for future field trips. Jimmy said he would contact Mark Delgrosso to help guide him through the process of setting up the field trip schedule for the next birding season.

**Sue Woodson** reported on behalf of Conservation Committee chairman Dave Woodson regarding the Crystal Lake property in Okla. City. City Care, a non-profit, has leased and manages the property primarily for inner-city residents' use. They have accomplished a massive cleanup of the area surrounding the lake. They asked if OKC Audubon would help with bird-related signage and activities with kids. They request we provide photos and verbiage for the signs and help with installation. The guard's name is Mason, and he now has been told Audubon members can enter the property for birding activity unless other incompatible activities are going on, such as archery events.

Guest **Don Maas**, a self-described "snowbird" from the Phoenix area, was introduced. **Jimmy Woodard** is planning a personal birding trip to Black Mesa over the Labor Day weekend, Sept. 1-3. Contact Jimmy if you're interested in joining him on the trip.

### New Business:

**Jim Bates** reported the Okla. Dept. of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) has extended the comment period regarding the Lesser Prairie Chicken plan until June 24. The plan is available at the ODWC website.

There will be no meeting in July or August; meetings will resume in September.

### There was no old business

Following the break, guest speaker **Claire Curry**, a Ph.D. candidate in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology program in the University of Oklahoma Department of Biology gave an informative, enthusiastic, and often humorous presentation on her five year study of the extensive hybridization in Texas and Oklahoma of the Black-Crested and Tufted Titmice. She discussed the song differences between the two species, causes of the song variation including vegetation, and how these differences could affect their interbreeding.

*Respectfully submitted for Nancy Reed  
by Marion Homier*

## Tufted Jay, cont.

And, for me, the most brilliant of these brilliant birds is the Tufted Jay—a species that even Roger Peterson called (in his Mexican field guide) “one of the most stunning of the jays.”

This species, too, is a citizen of Mexico – and only Mexico. It is one of those endemics that will eventually bring adventurous and beauty-seeking birders south of the border.

And even in Mexico it can only be found in the northwest section of the country, along the Pacific-facing slope of the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range. Here in this relatively arid habitat it will stick to the high pine or oak forests (like one encounters in the Chisos of Big Bend). Noisy and raucous, like all jays – indeed, all corvids, it should grab your attention without much difficulty.

And once seen, surely it will never be forgotten. It is brightly colored – but not in tropical hues. Primarily black, dark blue, and white it is the pattern of these colors that is striking. And, unlike many jays, it looks back at you with outstanding yellow eyes (like a grackle's). The last bit of ornament is that which gives the bird its name – something which I believe no other of the world's jays possesses – a big black pom-pom of a crest. What a bird!

If you seek this bird out in the Sierra Madres you will be fortunate, for here also are a small host of other Mexican specialties that would be worth the trip alone. The Red Warbler is here as is the Elegant Quail. The Thick-billed Parrot, which had occasionally appeared north of the border, has its stronghold here as well as Military Macaws. And these mountainous woods were once shared with the Imperial Woodpecker, the Mexican cousin of our Ivory-billed and just as rare (or possibly just as extinct).

**Note: Mark will be leading an OCAS tour to the Tufted Jay Preserve, Matzatlan, Mexico, March 13 - 23. Watch for more information in upcoming newsletters.**



## Recorders Report – Summer 2012

### An Interesting, Hot, Dry Summer

You never know what you will find when you go out birding in spite of the heat and drought. It was a challenging summer for the birds, plants and people. While there weren't as many days with temperatures over 100°F when it did turn hot it was really hot with several days tying for the hottest temperature on that day and one day tied for the all time hottest temperature. A host of wildfires swept through several areas in central Oklahoma destroying homes and changing the composition of the vegetation. While most things suffered during this time, insects abound which is a basic food staple for breeding birds and their families.

#### JUNE

On June 1<sup>st</sup> Chip Leslie was taking his daily walk around Boomer Lake in Stillwater when he spotted a **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** near the west shoreline by the old tennis court, and Tim O'Connell



confirmed the sighting the next day. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chris Clay saw the last spring Swainson's Hawk migrate through the Teal Ridge Wetland. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sharon Henthorn reported white-faced Ibis at Rose Lake and a **White Ibis** at the rookery at NW 10<sup>th</sup> and Council, and on the 4<sup>th</sup> Dave Evans reported Ruddy Ducks at Lake Hefner. On the 6<sup>th</sup> John Polo discovered an **Eastern Screech Owl** at Lake Stanley Draper, and Don Maas found a **Black-billed Cuckoo** near his home in Eastern Oklahoma City. On the 8<sup>th</sup> Mary and Lou Truex located a Bald Eagle at Taylor Lake and a Redhead Duck at Rush Springs Sewage Lagoons. On the 16<sup>th</sup> Matt Jung had been out walking the last several days and located a Common Yellowthroat on Morgan Road, and on the south side of the Coffey Dam a Green Heron, a singing Blue Grosbeak, Great Crested Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Gray Catbird, and Prothonotary Warbler.

#### JULY

On July 2<sup>nd</sup> on Macomb Road in Pottawatomie County Joe Grzybowski discovered a Yellow-throated Vireo, and at Lake Stanley Draper in early July Jim Bates found a few Red-eyed Vireos and a single Black-and-White Warbler. On the 7<sup>th</sup> at Prairie Dog Point and vicinity Jim had a Peregrine Falcon circle and land on the point near the Great Blue Herons. He also saw 3 small shorebirds that were possible Least Sandpipers. On the 10<sup>th</sup> Brian Davis reported a Black-chinned Hummingbird

had been coming to his feeder in Norman for the past several days. On the 11<sup>th</sup> Pat Velte photographed an American Golden Plover and **Piping Plover** at Prairie Dog Point on Lake Hefner. On the 12<sup>th</sup> Juliette Hulen returned from the Memorial in downtown Oklahoma City where Purple Martins were being encouraged to move to another nighttime roosting location. She started an unofficial "Roost Watch" on the 15<sup>th</sup>. On the 25<sup>th</sup> Brian found a juvenile White Ibis at the NE corner of Lake Overholser mixed in with some Snowy Egrets, nearly twenty American Avocets, and some Greater Yellowlegs. On the 29<sup>th</sup> Jim Bates and his son John were birding Lake Hefner near the mouth of the canal where they located a Marbled Godwit, Stilt Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers and in the distance John discovered a **Wood Stork**.

#### AUGUST

Along Lake Hefner on August 1<sup>st</sup> Jim reports that Pat Velte located Buff-breasted Sandpipers along the east side of the lake which he later observed as well as Forester's, Least and **Black Terns**. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joe discovered a Western Sandpiper, and the next day T.K. relocated the Marbled Godwit, along with Wilson's Phalarope and **Sanderling**. On the 4<sup>th</sup> along the river at the end of South Jenkins Dick Gunn reported the Snowy and Great Egrets were swarming the sandbars, cleaning up on small fish exposed in the shallows. He noticed a single darker, medium-sized heron in the group and identified a **Tri-colored Heron** amongst the blizzard of white wings and feathers.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> Matt took a morning walk along Lake Overholser Drive and located a **Black-necked Stilt** and Sharon Henthorn discovered a Belted Kingfisher. Jimmy Woodward heard several Upland Sandpipers migrating through Mustang as did Tim O'Connell over a still-smoldering field east of Stillwater. On the 7<sup>th</sup> Dick Gunn was walking along South Jenkins where he noticed a Least Flycatcher and then



an interesting bird caught his eye. It was small, active and had lots of bright yellow on its head and breast with a very distinct black eye-line, obviously a **Blue-winged Warbler** out of range. On the 8<sup>th</sup> he located an Olive-sided Flycatcher perched conspicuously on a

tall dead tree in the middle of the brush piles near the police range. On the 9<sup>th</sup> along the east shoreline of Prairie Dog Point Pat photographed a **Red Phalarope**, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> at the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge James Hubbell located a Summer Tanager.

Oklahoma City Audubon Society  
c/o Patricia Velte  
1421 NW 102nd Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73114

## Honeymoon Birding, cont.

We had lunch at one of the cafes in the zoo. We sat outside to eat and were quite entertained as several of the lunch crowd had to fend off brazen attempts by Western Gulls to steal their food! An added bird treat in the zoo was watching a nest of Hooded Orioles being attended by the pair.

After the requisite “find the Golden Gate Bridge” romp thru town, we stopped on the Marin Headlands at Richardson Bay Audubon Center. We didn’t see much here other than Caspian Terns and Marbled Godwits but we did enjoy the hike up and down the hill to the bay and the marvelous view.

As we headed north toward Petaluma in the afternoon, we ran into our only major traffic jam of the trip. Since it was the start of the Memorial Day weekend, it seemed as if everyone in town was headed north on Hwy 101 up the coast or toward the redwoods. After 45 minutes of stop and go, we were able to exit the highway and make our way to Petaluma on some scenic back roads. We made it to our motel in Petaluma, ate dinner and settled in for the evening enjoying a light rain shower.

*(Honeymoon birding, part 2, will appear in the Oct. issue)*

## Recorder’s Report (cont.)

On the 17<sup>th</sup> Joe located a Loggerhead Shrike and Orchard Oriole near Rose Lake; a Pied-billed Grebe at Lake Overholser; and Franklin’s Gull at Lake Hefner. On the 18<sup>th</sup> Nathan Hillis heard a Fish Crow at Arcadia Lake’s Spring Creek Park, and on the 25<sup>th</sup> Jimmy discovered a House Wren in Mustang. On the 27<sup>th</sup> Butch Enterline spotted an **Alder Flycatcher** at the Adkins Hill Sod Farm near Noble, and in Norman Lindell Dillon took a picture of a mystery flycatcher which was later identified as a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**. On the 28<sup>th</sup> David reminded the bird community that the remnants of Hurricane Isaac was passing through southeast Oklahoma so be on the lookout for Hurricane birds and on the 31<sup>st</sup> a Greater Shearwater was located and is included as another very interesting summer observation. What will fall bring?

Thanks to all who share their sightings and interesting stories with the rest of us. During the Summer **164** bird species were reported with **14** new species which increased the year’s total to **259** species in the Central Oklahoma area. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds and can be contacted by e-mail at [emkok@earthlink.net](mailto:emkok@earthlink.net). Esther M. Key, Editor.