



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

OKC-AUDUBON.ORG

October 2010

OKC's Native Nature Center

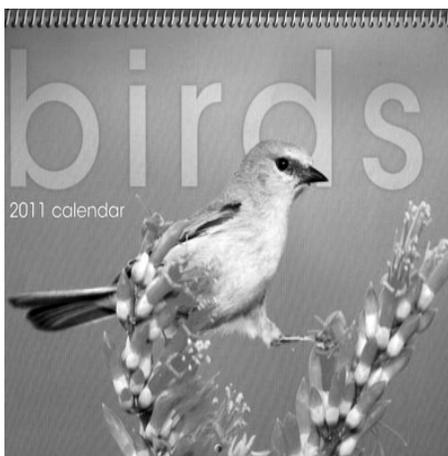
Casey Lindo will be the featured presenter at the October 18 meeting of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society.

Casey is the Naturalist at Martin Park Nature Center. Her background includes herpetology, environmental education and most recently native plants and birds. Her goals at the nature center include promoting native landscapes for birds and all animals that rely on Oklahoma's historically native ecosystems. She graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's degree in Zoology and the University of Texas –Tyler with a Master's degree in Biology. A native of Michigan, the Oklahoma City Zoo charmed her to OKC to work as a reptile keeper for 2 years before working at Martin Park. Casey enjoys hiking in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge and kayaking all over the state of Oklahoma. She and her husband spend time birding, searching for lizards, catching frogs, flipping rocks and enjoying the state and national parks.



Our meetings are held on the third Monday of each month from September through June. They begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Will Rogers Garden Center, I-44 and NW 36th Street. Visitors are always welcome.

2011 Calendars For Sale



Our beautiful new calendars are available for \$5 each. Pick one up at any meeting or order online at www.okc-audubon.org. (add \$1.50 each for mailing)



Refreshments for the October meeting will be provided by Jana Mott, Nealand Hill & Bill Diffin.

President's Perspective

By Bill Diffin

If you have an email address on file with OCAS, then you should have already received the following notice of changes to the OCAS Constitution along with a file attached containing the Constitution with revisions underlined. If you did not receive the email and want it resent to the same or another address, or if you want to be mailed a paper copy of the original or the revised document, then contact me by phone at 405-722-3778, or by email at WilliamDiffin@aol.com. The vote to approve the revisions will be conducted in the November meeting. Please come to the meeting if you can. A successful vote for approval requires a quorum of 29 members or 21 memberships and a 2/3 majority vote in favor.

Hi OCAS Members,

Our Constitution needs to be updated. A fairly extensive set of changes is being proposed to codify existing practices, assign responsibility for record-keeping, make the process of obtaining a quorum more robust, and establish the Webmaster as a Committee Chairmanship position. These changes are summarized below.

The following changes are made to Article III:

1. The annual dues amount is no longer stated in the Constitution. Future changes to the dues can be approved with a simple majority vote in a regular meeting, provided the vote is announced one month in advance to the membership. The amount of the dues will no longer be a constitutional matter. This change codifies what has been the actual practice in approval of dues increases.
2. An eligible voter is ordinarily a resident of Central Oklahoma. Other members are eligible to vote if they attend the meeting. This change reduces the number of persons required for a quorum.
3. The presence of a quorum is checked by first counting *members* at a meeting. If there are insufficient *members* for a quorum, then a count is made of the *memberships* present at the meeting, where one dues equals one *membership*. Voting can proceed if there is a quorum based on *memberships*. If neither method satisfies the 20% quorum requirement, then the assembly present will vote to either postpone the election to the next meeting or conduct an email vote. This change together with the change in 2. above will make obtaining a quorum more sensible and practical.

4. It is specified that up to two members of a nuclear family can be designated as eligible voters under one dues-paying membership. This addition codifies established practice.

The following changes are made to Article IV:

5. The Nominating Committee is charged with recommending candidates for each of the committee chairpersons in addition to recommending candidates for elected offices. This change codifies established practice.
6. It is specified that the Nominating Committee is appointed in the month of October and that the Committee's list of candidates is published in the December Newsletter. These additions codify established practice.
7. The Secretary is charged with maintaining an archive of the official written (non-electronic) business correspondence of the Society.
8. The Secretary and the President are empowered to sign checks on an emergency basis in the event the Treasurer is incapacitated. This change codifies established practice.
9. The Education Committee is removed from the Constitution. This change codifies established practice.
10. The Publicity Chairperson's duties are revised to delete the duties related to the National Audubon Society. Beyond the remaining duty of seeing that notices of meetings are published in the local newspaper, the duties are expanded to include seeking out opportunities to communicate the existence, activities and purposes of the Society to the public.
11. The Webmaster is given the status of a Committee Chairperson, and the Webmaster is assigned the duties of building and maintaining the website and keeping an archive of the electronic correspondence of the Society.

The following change is made to Article V:

12. The location of the regular monthly meeting can be somewhere other than the Will Rogers Garden Center if the Executive Board decides on another place and announces it to the membership.

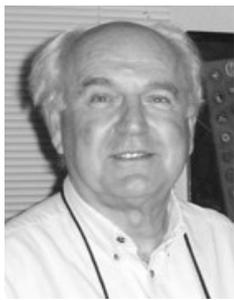
The following change is made to Article VI:

13. The new voting rules presented in Article III apply in votes to change the Constitution.

Bill Diffin
President

Bird of the Month

By John Shackford



The Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) used to be considered to have several subspecies, including 3 that could be found in Oklahoma. Recently the Solitary Vireo was split into 3 “new” species, the Blue-headed (*V. solitarius*), Plumbeous (*V. plumbeous*), and Cassin’s (*V. cassinii*) vireos. All 3 species can be found in Oklahoma, the latter 2 primarily in Cimarron County, while

the Blue-headed Vireo is the one we normally find here in central Oklahoma, and is the most prevalent of the three species found in the state. Of the 3 “new” species, the Blue-headed Vireo is the most colorful, having a greener back and brighter yellow on the flanks than the other 2.

The Blue-headed Vireo is seen in central Oklahoma only during spring and fall migration. It appears to be the heartiest of the vireos, normally staying later in the fall than other vireos. Because this is such a hearty vireo, it is worth keeping watch for them even into November—the OOS Date Guide gives November 1 as the normal ending date, but quite a number of years ago I saw a “Solitary Vireo”—almost certainly a Blue-headed—at Stinchcomb Refuge in late November or early December. The Blue-headed even overwinter in McCurtain County, according to the OOS Date Guide. Last year, the Broken Bow, OK, Christmas Bird Count had 2 Blue-headed Vireos, Dallas, TX, had 3, and Little Rock, AR had 4. It winters from the southern U.S. south to El Salvador, but the bird’s winter range, apparently, is moving northward.



We do not have the species as a nester here in Oklahoma and when I wracked my brain for some memory about its nesting, I came up empty—and curious—so I went to bird books and the internet. It usually nests from the southern Appalachian Mountains northward to well into Canada, then across most of southern Canada and a bit into the northern U.S. It normally nests in stands of white pine or hemlock that usually have some hardwood trees mixed in. It builds a typical vireo nest, one that hangs from the fork of a small limb, usually an evergreen limb. The nest is generally 5-20 feet above the ground and normally contains 4 eggs, although nests of 3 and 5 eggs are known. The species behavior at the nest is often so “trusting,” according to Bent (Life Histories of North American Wagtails, Shrikes, Vireos, and their Allies; reprint edition 1965), that one can often touch a bird on the nest. Incubating birds even have been

picked off the nest, then place back on, without the bird ever trying to flutter away. Also it has been known to take food from a person’s hand when food is presented to an incubating bird. I feel pretty sure that the Migratory Bird Act now prohibits people from picking vireos (or most anything else) off nests as described above, and I would not suggest doing so in any case. But this is a most interesting vireo behavior observed by earlier naturalists. This vireo is a frequent victim of nest parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds, but Breeding Bird Survey data since 1966 indicate that numbers in recent years have increased in most areas.

Of the Blue-headed Vireo, Bent said that “[q]uiet dignity and an air of calm repose seem to dominate its behavior in the security of its woodland home.” This same air, I believe, pertains to migrating Blue-headed Vireos, and can be a refreshing behavioral change, when compared with the more animated behavior of warbler species one often sees nearby.

Lots 'o Litter - Not!

The Oklahoma City Audubon Society joined the Oklahoma City Beautiful Adopt-A-Park program in 2006 with a commitment to help control litter at Prairie Dog Point. During our first event, held in conjunction with OKC’s Litter Blitz campaign, we collected car parts, kitchen appliances, tires and piles of debris from the area. The clean up efforts of our volunteers are now paying big dividends as evidenced by less litter to be picked up during each of our semi-annual clean up events at Lake Hefner. While we can’t claim that this means there isn’t trash to be found -- we filled 20 bags

during the October 9 cleanup -- we’re just finding less each time.

Oklahoma City Beautiful’s program is based on the concept that if areas are kept clean, people are less likely to use them as a place to litter. Our Adopt-A-Park area has some unique challenges since it is used for fishing, picnics, baseball, football, and after-dark under-age drinking (perhaps the reason we found women’s clothing). We can’t eliminate litter from those activities but we are making a difference. Our thanks go to the volunteers who helped with trash collection on October 9: Jimmy Woodard, Nadine Varner, Bill Diffin, Doug Eide, Sharon Henthorne, and Pat Velte.

Oklahoma City Audubon Society Minutes of September 20, 2010

President Bill Diffin called the meeting to order and asked for an introduction of all visitors. Five first time visitors were in attendance.

President Diffin asked for any corrections or changes to the June minutes as published in the Sept. newsletter. Minutes were accepted as published.

Treasurer's Report by Nancy Vicars:

Cash on Hand 6/21/10	\$5,364.51
Deposits	36.54
Disbursements	428.68
Cash on Hand 9/30/10	\$4,972.37

President Diffin asked for any questions, corrections or changes to the report as read. A motion was made & approved to accept.

Jimmy Woodard noted a few changes to the field trip schedule published in the newsletter. The addition of state and local field trips were listed along with OCAS field trips. Jimmy encouraged all participants of a field trip to notify the group leader prior to the day of the trip.

Jimmy gave a quick review of the trip to Quivira NWR. Eleven people enjoyed sightings of many shore birds. Significant sightings were of a Peregrine Falcon and a Red-necked Phalarope.

Monthly field trips have been scheduled through the end of the year. These trips will be listed on our website. In addition, weekly field trips are led by Bill Diffin. Bill schedules the weekly destination according to the recent postings reported on OKBirds. Notification of the weekly fields trips are sent by e-mail. If you are not receiving an e-mail notice and would like to receive these, notify Nancy Vicars with your e-mail address.

President Diffin stated our Constitution must be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the membership present, with a regular quorum of 20% of the membership being present. An amendment must be submitted to the membership at least one month prior to its

adoption. An amendment to increase the dues will be presented at the October meeting and will be voted on at the November meeting.

Nancy Vicars presented a detailed budget for 2010 outlining the need for a dues increase. Cost of the newsletter per person is \$1.10 or \$11.00 per year. Cost of the meeting place is \$200 per year or \$2 per person. CBC cost is \$300 per year averaging \$3 per person. All of these costs average each member cost at \$16.00 per year. Our average membership is 100-105. We have sold calendars for years to make up the deficient. She suggested we reduce the calendars from \$7 to \$5. Nancy presented a history of how the club originally made a profit. These options are not available in today's market. She also stated the meeting room rate has not increased since the 1980's. A discussion followed on the appropriate amount of the dues.

Patti stated many of our members do not have computers, therefore, the newsletter is the only link to our information.

President Diffin stated there were other changes to the constitution that need to be addressed. The constitution states only the Treasurer can dispense money. This needs to be changed so the President or the Secretary can dispense money in the absence of the Treasurer.

Nealand Hill made a recommendation to combine the Historian duties with the Secretary duties.

Nealand Hill asked if any progress had been made on the club patches project. Susan Schmidt is in charge of the patches and she was not attendance. Meeting was adjourned for snacks.

Warren Harden is planning on next month's meeting topic to be on Sicssortails.

Warren introduced Elaine Gregory as tonight's speaker on Bugs for Birds. Elaine presented many books and photos from her personal collection.

September Weekly Birders

9/11 -- Lake Overholser Cofferdam -- We were accompanied by two out of town birders, Dan and Laurie Mooney, who are staying in OKC for a couple of months. Along the edge of the woods we saw Wood Ducks, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler and Empid Flycatcher. On the west end of the rollover dam, juvenile Black-crowned Night Herons. Off the point of the retaining wall we could see Black Terns and Forster's Terns on the emergent dead brush south of the mud flats. On the mud flats, Dark Ibis, Least Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper and Blue-winged Teal. In the sandbar willows, Bell's Vireo and above the willows, Belted Kingfisher. On the east end of the rollover dam, Juvenile Green Heron.

Rose Lake -- Swainson's Hawk, American Kestrel, Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler and American Goldfinch.

Foreman Rd west of Yukon -- Dark Ibis with Snowy and Great Egrets at Banner Rd. A Cooper's Hawk attacked a flock of Brown-headed Cowbirds at Evans Rd.

Yukon City Park, South Side -- Wilson's Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Brown Thrasher, Baltimore Oriole, Red-shouldered Hawk, White-winged Dove and Mississippi Kite. 50 species total for the day. Participants: Dan & Laurie Mooney, Doug Eide, Charles Douglas and Bill Diffin

9/18 -- Tulsa 31st & Riverside -- There were many Wilson's Warblers. Other good birds were Nashville Warbler, American Redstart, Black-and-white Warbler, Blue-

headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Least Flycatcher, Traill's Flycatcher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole.

Oxley Nature Center Flowline Trail --

There is apparently a large colony of Red-headed

Woodpeckers that lives along one section of the trail. It was fascinating to hear their constant



chattering, occasional querp calls and rapid drumming. Other good birds were American Goldfinch, American Redstart and Least Flycatcher.

North Woods Trail -- An Olive-sided Flycatcher over the trail in a dead tree allowed us as good a look as one is likely to get of the species. Consistent with the two previous locations, we found many Wilson's Warblers and Red-headed Woodpeckers. Other good birds were Eastern Phoebe, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Wood Duck, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, American Kestrel and Nashville Warblers. 35 species total for the day. Participants: Charles Douglas and Bill Diffin



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

Officers 2010

President	Bill Diffin	722-3778
Vice President	John Shackford	340-5057
Secretary	Nancy Reed	799-1116
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars	732-9885
Parliament	Sam Moore	752-9549
Programs	Warren Harden	364-3491
Recorder	Esther M. Key	381-9170
Conservation	Larry Mays	392-2131
Field Trips	Jimmy Woodard	365-5685
Newsletter Editors:		
	Pat Velte	751-5263
	Carla Brueggen	495-3259
Publicity	Cheryl Allen	478-0339
Historian	Nealand Hill	388-6759
Refreshments	Jim Vicars	732-9885
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

A GUAN'S TAIL

BY Mark Delgrosso

I was a teenager when I purchased my first Peterson guide to Mexican birds. I poured over the plates endlessly - fantasizing, daydreaming, finding it hard to believe that such wonderful-looking creatures lived in the country next door. Back then I had little idea that I would ever encounter these beauties in the wild - such delights as the Toucan, the Red and Pink-headed Warblers, Chlorophonias, the macaws, the Quetzal, and - perhaps the most charismatic of them all - the Horned Guan. With its bright red horn, a white star of an eye, huge size - I had to see this bird before I died.

It felt like I might die - collapse in a heap from exhaustion. The route up to guan territory is just that - up. And up and up. Here I am, early forties, out of shape, but hiking up the slopes of Atitlan volcano in the highlands of Guatemala. In terms of a cardio-vascular workout and calorie-burning, the Horned Guan is the healthiest bird you'll ever see. I've worked no harder for any other. Our trek began in the cool dark of early early morning. I awoke at 2:30 am in order to meet my guides at 3. We had to start this early to be on the guan grounds by daybreak, and it's a several hour hike. I was in no condition to do this. I had grave doubts about my ability to make it up this mountain and even questioned my desire to see this bird - is any bird really worth this exertion? Silly thoughts - and I pressed on. It was by spotlight that we passed under, still sitting on their night roost, a pair of Singing Quails. We heard Mottled Owls and a Cacomistle (a Ringtail cousin), and, as the sky began lightening, night sounds gave way to day sounds: a Blue-throated Motmot and Gray-breasted Wood-Wren. We continued up. An Emerald Toucanet made an appearance as well as Common Bush-Tanagers. Finally, we were where the guans should be. One of the guides, the "guan whisperer", went off to rustle one up. A welcome rest. Sucking every atom of juice out of an apple, I laid back waiting for the call to chase down a Horned Guan. An hour passed, then close to two. The guan man returned, empty-handed. No guans were in the area!

That was it then. The end of the dream. Crestfallen, we trudged back on down the volcano. I still had several more days here, but could I do this all again? I didn't think so. I was running plans through my mind as to when I could return here and make another go. That's the game - sometimes you hit it, and sometimes you miss.

But this was not the end. The next day, a guan was spotted on the volcano by a birding group down from Canada. I *had* to give it another run - the birds had reappeared and I was here.

Going back up was an ugly prospect, but knowing the guans were present gave me the *oomph* I needed to crawl back up. And up and up I went again. And, yes, finally saw the great Horned Guan. Either a young male or female (virtually all ages and sexes look alike) it hopped about in the branch tops, croaking away. My last view of it was classic: perched on a huge, epiphyte-covered branch as the mist began to pour through the cloud forest. The trek down the mountain took no time at all.



Image credit: Albert Earl Gilbert, *Horned Guan*. Published in Delacour & Amadon (1973)

Recorders Report – September 2010

Fall migration from shorebirds to sparrows

After the long, hot, dry summer, welcome rain arrived at various times and locations throughout the month. As the grasses greened up, the sunflowers and goldenrods brought a bright yellow glow to the landscape. Flocks of birds gathered to begin the migration south as shorebirds, gulls, and a few sparrows arrived, some to refuel for their trip further south, others to stay for the winter. Plants prepared a feast of nectar for the pollinating bees, butterflies and insects that hopefully will create a bountiful seed crop for the winter birds.

On the 1st Matt Jung and Bill Diffin separately walked the Coffey Dam on Lake Overholser and located Black Terns, Northern Shoveler, Chimney Swift and American Avocets. On the 3rd at Ten-Mile Flats Brian Davis detected 30 Buff-breasted Sandpipers and 2 female Yellow-headed Blackbirds. In Stillwater Tim O'Connell found an immature Mourning Warbler during his window-collision study.

On the 10th Joe Grzybowski was returning from discovering Cave Swallows in southwest Oklahoma when he saw White-faced Ibises and Long-billed Curlew in a flooded field east of Chickasha. On the 11th the OCAS Weekly Birders led by Bill reported an Orange-crowned Warbler along the Coffey Dam and a Peregrine Falcon near Rose Lake, and on the 12th at Rose Lake Mary Lane sited an immature Wood Duck. At Lake Hefner Jim Bates discovered a **Ruddy Turnstone** and an Osprey and the next day Ben Holt added **Semipalmated Plovers**. On the 14th along Foreman Road Jimmy Woodard found Wilson's Phalaropes, and in Stillwater on the 16th John Polo noticed about 30 Common Nighthawks flying just over the trees.

On the 18th Jimmy birded the Yukon City Park and was rewarded with a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Red-headed Woodpeckers, and a Blue-headed Vireo. On the 19th along Morgan Road Matt Jung had Savannah Sparrow, Spotted Sandpiper, **Solitary Sandpiper**, and at Lake Overhol-

ser Jimmy located a couple of Bonaparte's Gulls. On the 20th at Lake Hefner Matt had a fly-by from a juvenile Bald Eagle. Meanwhile at the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge Eivvind Vamraak and Bill discovered a Black-bellied Plover, **Western Sandpiper**, White-eyed Vireo, Long-billed Dowitcher, Northern Harrier, and on the 21st Bill added an Orchard Oriole.

On the 25th Jimmy led the OCAS field trip to Yukon City Park and discovered a male American Redstart, Black-and-white Warbler, Crackling Goose, and female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. In eastern Oklahoma City Jim Bates located a Gray Catbird at Crystal Lake, and later on the way to the grocery store, he stopped at a group of willows where he found a Sedge Wren. At Lake Overholser Ben and Angie Holt saw an early Rusty Blackbird. On the 26th at the Yukon City Park Jimmy reported House Wrens and a Black-throated Green Warbler, and on the 27th Bill also saw the warbler and maybe a Philadelphia Vireo.

On the 28th Dick Gunn and Cecil Johnson spotted the South Jenkins's resident white Red-tailed Hawk sitting on a power pole just off Chautauqua. This bird was first seen in October 2004 making Thursday her six-year anniversary. After work on the 29th as I arrived at the entrance to our subdivision in Tuttle, there was a Barred Owl patiently sitting on a post watching me watching it.



Along the east side of the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge Bill found the first fall Clay-colored and Lincoln's Sparrows, while in Mustang, Jimmy also noticed a Clay-colored Sparrow visiting his backyard.

Joe Grzybowski reports the arbor vitae are packing a cone crop this year and predicts the Red Crossbills will find them in

December, if not sooner. We could have some interesting bird watching out there for the rest of the year so check it out. During September a total of **121** bird species were reported with **4** new additions making the Central Oklahoma area to date total at **257** species. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds by turning in reports. I can be contacted at emkok@earthlink.net. Esther M. Key, Editor.

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

Field Trip Schedule

- Oct. 30: **Lake Overholser** Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Route 66 Park. Leader: Matt Jung
- Nov. 6: **Salt Plains NWR** (joint trip w/Tulsa Audubon) Leader: Jerry Vanbebber Meet at 7:30, IHOP, I-40 & Mustang Rd. in Yukon.
- Nov. 13: **Arcadia Lake** Meet at 8 a.m. at Braum's in Edmond, I-35 & 15th St. Leader: Bill Diffin
- Dec. 4: **Overholser & Hefner Lakes** Meet at 8:00 a.m. on the west side of the Overholser dam flood gates, at County Line Rd and Lake Overholser Drive on the south side of the lake. Leader: John Shackford
- Dec. 18: **OKC Audubon Christmas Bird Count**
- Jan. 3 **Stephens Co. CBC** Meet at 6:15-6:30 a.m. at Daybreak Diner in Duncan, 116 Hwy 81S. Contact June Ketchum at 405-919-2459 or june.ketchum@duncanregional.com
- Jan. 8: **Crystal Lake/Bridgestone** Meet at 8:00 a.m. at McDonald's, I-40 & Council Rd. Leader: Jim Bates
- Jan. 15: **Longspur search / Norman area** Angid & Ben Holt will lead us to search for longspurs at Embassy Suites and the 10 Mile Flats area. Details TBA
- Jan. 12-16 **TOS Winter meeting in Fr. Worth** Texas Ornithological Society meeting Lyn Barber at dalybar@aol.com
- Jan. 22 **Canton Lake** details TBA
- Feb. 5 **Sooner Lake** (joint trip with Tulsa Audubon) details TBA
- Feb. 12 **Foss Lake** Leader: Larry Mays details TBA
- Feb. 26: **Woodcock Watch** Patty Muzny will host us to observe woodcocks at her cabin just east of Byars
- March 5 **Tenkiller Lake** (joint trip with Tulsa Audubon) details TBA
- March 19 **Stinchcomb WMA** Meet at 8 a.m. at Jim's Restaurant, NW 39th St. & Council Rd. Leader: Jim Bates
- March 26 **South Jenkins St./Norman** Leader: Dick Gunn details TBA
- Apr. ?? **OKC Zoo Behind the scenes birding** Tour the zoo and bird the grounds Leader: Nadine Varner
- Apr. 29 **Salt Plains Bird Festival**
- May/June **Club picnic and Nightjar walk at Lake Draper** details TBA
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