



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

OKC-AUDUBON.ORG

February, 2013

Nature photography of Southwest Oklahoma

The speaker for the February 18 OKC Audubon Society meeting will be Larry Hancock of Ardmore. Birds, Bugs and Blooms: Nature photography of Southwest Oklahoma will be a photographic presentation of the wildlife and habitat of the southwest areas of Oklahoma he drives, kayaks and hikes through to find subjects for his love of the outdoors and photography. He is an excellent naturalist, photographer, wood turner and all-around artist and lover of nature.

Mr. Hancock says: "I graduated high school in Alabama, spent two years in California to try college and came to Oklahoma to learn Horseshoeing so I could be back in the outdoors with animals. My second day in Oklahoma in 1981 I met my soon to be wife and stayed. Since 1983 I have worked as a mechanic at the Michelin Tire Plant in Ardmore and raised two sons. My first serious hobby was woodturning which I taught and demonstrated throughout Oklahoma and north Texas for about 20 years (www.turnedtreasures.com). Designing a web site for instructions on turning different projects led me to my new hobby of photography (<http://hancockdigitalphoto.com/>), in its 8th year now. Birds became my primary interest at first and still are a main subject for my photography but the more I look around the more I see just how fascinating the tiny world is just under my feet that I normally wouldn't notice but through photography I can capture and enlarge it for easy viewing. I also volunteer as a photographer for the wildlife services of the area to help document rare sightings of birds or for their archives so they have pictures of the plants and wildlife to use for publications and records."



Black-capped vireo

Come out and bring some friends. They will love it. 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.

Welcome

The Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes new member, Gerre Slaton, Edmond

Cookie Patrol

Refreshments for the February 18th meeting will be provided by: Jim Bates, Carla Brueggen, Steve Davis and Mary Lane.

DUES NOTICE

It's time once again to renew your annual membership for 2013. 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.

President's Perspective

By Bill Diffin



Last month as part of our exploration of the Corvoidea we listened to the "jeer" and "toolili" calls of the Blue Jay and searched for similar sounding calls among the passerine supergroups we have covered so far. We found similar calls in the other corvoids and BSAG, but didn't find them in the suboscines. It is worth expanding a little further on the

theme of similarity in vocalizations in related birds. When we listened to the "wheep" of the Great Crested Flycatcher last month, did you also listen to the dawn song, http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/great_crested_flycatcher/sounds? It bears an amazing resemblance to the song of the Eastern Phoebe, http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Phoebe/sounds. Now listen to the second of the "Chatter vocalizations" for the phoebe, and follow that up with the "Various angry calls" recording of the GC Flycatcher. The GC Flycatcher is more variable, but they both chatter in a similar way.

As an example of two closely related corvoids that look and sound somewhat alike, take the Steller's Jay and the Blue Jay. Let's start with the "toolili"-like call of the Steller's Jay. This could be what we hear in the 4th call



recording at the following link, http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Stellers_Jay/sounds, i.e. the "too-[rattle]". At least it is the closest Steller's audio I could find to "toolili". However Sibley's guide describes a "clear, whistled whidoo" that must be closer to "toolili". The Blue Jay can be heard in the 4th call recording, [http://](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Blue_Jay/sounds)

www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Blue_Jay/sounds. In fact Blue Jays make two different calls that fit Sibley's single "toolili" description. Some references differentiate them into a "bell call" or "toolool" and a "squeaky gate" or "queadle", http://identify.whatbird.com/obj/99/overview/blue_jay.aspx. Could "toolool" and "queadle" correspond to the two different song alternations of the E Phoebe and the GC Flycatcher?

Both the Blue Jay and the Steller's Jay have a true male songbird song. You can hear the Steller's Jay song at the link in the paragraph above. On the All About Birds site the Blue Jay's song is called a "whisper song", and there is no recording, only a description (see the link in the paragraph above). However the description fits the Steller's Jay song very well. In Sibley's guide they are

both referred to as a "quiet, thrasher-like song". We can probably assume these songs are a jumble of imitations, and in this they resemble the Lyrebird's song (September's

Perspective). How widespread is the "quiet, thrasher-like song" among the other corvoids? It is not described in my references, but it is tempting to speculate that it may be whispered so quietly that it is not yet well known. After all, it exists in songbirds as distantly related as the lyrebird, our two jays and the thrasher. In fact I know of other cases and will present them as we go along.



Before we finish with the Corvoidea, it is worth discussing color. Have you noticed a tendency toward black or white or blue or some combination, neatly exemplified by our Blue and Steller's Jays? Other examples are the American Crow, Scrub Jays, Black-billed Magpie and Clark's Nutcracker. The counterexample likely to spring to mind is the Green Jay, but check the head colors here, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/green-jay-cyanocorax-yncas/close-head-sideways>. The Brown Jay is a true exception. A really beautiful example is the Taiwan Blue Magpie, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/taiwan-blue-magpie-urocissa-caerulea/eating-papaya>, and <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/node/172596>. All of the corvoid birds just mentioned come from a single family, the Crow family (Corvidae). Other corvoid families have different color themes. The Old World Oriole family has many members with yellow patches, and the Cuckoo-shrike family has many members with red, for example <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/scarlet-minivet-pericrocotus-flammeus/male-perched-1>. The Birds-of-Paradise family has the full color spectrum represented, for example, <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/red-bird-paradise-paradisaea-rubra/male-perched-trunk>, and <http://ibc.lynxeds.com/photo/wilson039s-bird-paradise-cicinnurus-respublica/male-displaying-court>.

Scissortail Flycatcher Embroidery at Stitch N Print

Susan and Bill Schmidt

You can have the 3 inch Oklahoma City Audubon Society logo sewn onto your own garment for \$14.20 (\$15.39 with tax). A discount is available for any four of these logos ordered at the same time (they can be sewn on different items) for \$13.22 each. When ordering, reference the OKC Audubon Society at Stitch N Print, 450 N. Rockwell Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73127, phone 405-789-8862.

Bird of the Month

By John Shackford



Did you ever stop to think what an odd bird the American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) is? Here is a shorebird that shuns shores for thickets, brush and grassy areas. A shorebird with stripes on the top of its head that go the “wrong” way—laterally, across, rather than longitudinally, the usual way for shorebirds. There are other odd things. Woodcocks have a sensitive and flexible tip of the beak that allow it to probe in soft ground more efficiently for food—reminiscent to me of the sensitive bill tip of the Kiwi of New Zealand. Its eyes are placed very high on the head: it has 360 degree vision horizontally and 180 degree vision vertically. It is one of the few shorebirds with short stubby legs, and it, along with the Killdeer, is one of the few shorebirds that nests inland in the southeastern U. S. It is a shorebird that may show up and probe for earthworms on a lawn in your neighborhood, not a place for most other shorebirds, except Killdeers. The American Woodcock is related to the Wilson’s Snipe, but considering how many differences there are between the two species, I wonder just how close the relationship between them really is.



The status of the American Woodcock, according to Sutton (Oklahoma birds, 1967) is as a “Transient and summer visitant in eastern and central Oklahoma.” Woodcocks likely nest at Lake Draper, in Oklahoma City, but this is hard to prove: the species is quite effective at selecting nesting sites where humans rarely go. The most reliable way to see the birds themselves is on their courtship grounds, as they do courtship flights and calls. I gathered much of the remaining part of this paragraph from Wikipedia—their information was a little clearer than most others. Calls are done around dawn and dusk. A courtship call the males make on the ground is described as a short, buzzy **peent**, repeated a number of times. The male will then rise into the air about 50-100 yards, and begin a downward “zigzagging and banking, while singing a liquid, chirping song.” The downward flight produces a “melodious twittering sound produced by air rushing through the male’s outer primary wing feathers.”

The woodcock begins courtship displays very early in the year: we already have reports, in January, of the birds doing their courtship calls at Draper Lake. Jimmy

Woodard has taken field trips to see these displays at Draper in the past, and he is leading a field trip there on March 5. For further details see field trips listed in this newsletter. If you cannot make Jimmy’s field trip, but still want to hear and possibly see woodcocks on your own, here are the directions to the Draper spot: Exit I-240 at Douglas Blvd. and turn south. At the T, turn right (west) onto the access road that runs along the north end of Lake Draper. Follow this road west for about ¾ mile. Just before Midwest Blvd, there is a dirt parking area on the left (south) side of the road. You will see a port-a-potty and a couple of small structures. Park here and watch and listen for the woodcocks. (Douglas Blvd. runs just outside the eastern border of Tinker Air Force Base).

I suspect there are other woodcocks at other places at Draper. While working on the Black-capped Vireo on the east side of Draper several years ago, I flushed at least one woodcock several times one year at the edge of a blackberry thicket there. This, as best I remember, was likely in at least May and June. So if you get to kicking around at Draper, keep in mind the possibility of finding a woodcock.

Jimmy Woodard and Nadine Varner found a woodcock below the dam at Lake Overholser on our Christmas Bird Count this (last) year—December 15, 2012. With some detective work, perhaps we will find that they are likely nesting there also. Jumping a bird or two there during late winter and spring this year would be a great clue that this could be happening.

A. C. Bent (1962, Life histories of North American shore birds) said that “in over 40 years of fieldwork I have seen but one nest with eggs” of the woodcock and this one was shown to him; he also stated that “I have never known how or where to look for its nests,” and adds that for nesting an “abundance of leaves seems to be an essential requirement.” The woodcock usually lays four eggs, and this is one similarity to most other shorebirds. Eggs hatch after about 20-21 days and young leave the nest within a day or two.

There are two wide-ranging woodcock species in the world. The most wide-ranging of these is the Eurasian Woodcock, found over most of Eurasia. The other wide-ranging one is the American Woodcock, found over most of the eastern half of the U.S. and well north into eastern Canada. In the world, there are a total of 5 or 6 other woodcock species, all found on islands; the 5-6 “hedge” is because one island species, the New Guinea Woodcock (*Scolopax (saturata) rosenbergii*), may be extinct.

In Memory: Nealand Hill

Sadly our former president Nealand Hill passed away February 4, 2013. Nealand was born in Ryan, OK, and is survived by his children Cory Hill and Keli Barbee of Yukon, OK, and his 6 grandchildren Tallen, Keefer, Sophi Jo, Morgan, Raegan and Bradyn; his brother John Hill of Guthrie, OK and his sister Judy Brittain of Grants, NM.



Nealand served in the US Navy for 11 years. Nealand was a great friend to the birding community and to birds. Among his many contributions, he loved to be an ambassador and salesman for OCAS at events like the Earthfest at Martin Park and the ODWC Expo at the Lazy E in Guthrie. Bestowing the gift of birding on others was just one expression of the basic generosity of his character. He will be sorely missed.

In lieu of flowers you may make a donation to the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Nongame Wildlife Fund.

Oklahoma City Audubon Society

Officers 2013

President	Bill Diffin	722-3778
Vice President	John Shackford	340-5057
Secretary	Sharon Henthorn	521-9958
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars	831-1945
Parliament	Ted Golden	354-3619
Programs	Warren Harden	364-3491
Recorder	Esther M. Key	735-1021
Conservation	Dave Woodson	601-622-3467
Field Trips	Mark Delgrosso	242-2759
Newsletter Editors:		
	Pat Velte	751-5263
	Carla Brueggen	495-3259
Publicity	Doug Eide	495-8192
Historian	Vacant	
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

Minutes

Meeting of OCAS January 28, 2013

Meeting called to order by President Bill Diffin. Minutes were approved from December meeting.

Committee Reports:

Field trips: Mark Delgrosso reminded us of the Grey Snow Eagle House visit scheduled for February 16th.

Lake Draper will have a woodcock watch on March 15.

April will have the Lesser Prairie Chicken Festival and a followup trip to Black Mesa

Conservation: Dave Woodson could not be present, so Sharon Henthorn reported that the Great Backyard Bird Count will take place this year from February 15-18. It is conducted for research sponsored by Cornell School of Ornithology. Details can be found at www.birdsource.org.

Nancy Vicars, Treasurer reported that we have about \$5950 in the account, and that dues are still coming in.

Old Business: The cleanup of Prairie Dog Point at Lake Hefner will resume this Saturday, with Sharon Henthorn organizing it and bringing supplies.

New Business: Susan Schmidt reported that she has contracted with Stitch 'n Print in OKC to provide patches of the OCAS logo, established 1947. The company can be contacted directly for ordering.

New members in attendance: Jerry Slayton of Edmond, Sandy Schickedanz. Danielle from Harrah.

Sharon Henthorn, Secretary

Chirpings

January – early February 2013

By Patti Muzny

The Cooper's Hawks continue to diligently monitor the feeder activity in our Oklahoma City back yard. We have not actually seen them catch anything, but they certainly do try and they wreak havoc with the House Sparrow population. We have been enjoying the serenades of an exuberant Bewick's Wren, who is sometimes in competition with the neighborhood Carolina Wren, and the Cardinals and the Robins. It's not spring yet, but several species are getting an early start.



Sunday, February 10, when Brian and I began a hike around the neighborhood, we heard the “mewing” sound of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the pecan trees across the street from our home. We stood there a few seconds and watched as it flew from tree-to-tree. I think this was a new sighting for our area. Periodically the Red-breasted Nuthatches are heard calling and our House Finches have returned and brought with them a few American Goldfinches.

On February 1st as I was returning to work from having lunch in Capitol Hill, I looked up to watch a Red-tailed Hawk soaring over the river at South Shields. But...up above the hawk I spotted a much larger, dark bird and soon realized I was looking at an adult Bald Eagle! Pretty cool lunch hour treat for me. Where are the binocs when I could really use them? Brian was driving toward Tinker AFB one evening and spotted a Long-eared Owl flying across SW 59th and Sooner Road.

The OKBirds subscribers have been posting tidbits about a Cardinal with a partially white head. At our Byars feeder, I've seen a female Cardinal with part of her crest and head a bright white. I've also seen a male Cardinal



with pink feathers on his back and primaries. We've also had an occasional Purple Finch throughout the winter. On Sunday, February 3, Brian hiked down toward our creek to see if the Woodcocks might have returned and might have been calling. The wind was light and it was not cold and we'd had about ¼ of an inch or moisture. Yes, the Woodcocks are back and

were found calling and displaying in McClain County. While the leaves were damp, the ground was still quite hard and I hope the Woodcocks don't try to jab their beaks too far! Might see a few Woodcocks with bent beaks!

It is amazing how bird populations and activity change in a week. One week in late January the prairie in front of our cabin was nearly covered with Robins and they seemed to be everywhere we walked. The next week Robin was a species that didn't make our list at all. They seemed to be feeding on poison ivy and hackberry fruit when they were plentiful. I guess they ate everything they found and moved on. That's what makes birding so interesting – one never can predict what might appear.

Save the date!

Oklahoma City Audubon Society's founder and first president, Dr. Sam Moore, celebrates his 100th birthday on March 30th! A birthday celebration in his honor will be held at The Fountains at Canterbury, March 30th from 2:30 - 4:30 pm. Watch for more information in next month's newsletter.

TOP 25 : Any BIRD of PARADISE

By Mark Delgrosso

FAMILY: Paradisaeidae

RANGE: mostly New Guinea and a few nearby isles; some species in N and E Australia

HABITAT: rain forest, both lowland and montane (depending on the species); some also in grassland situations

STATUS: all have potential threats in the form of deforestation

Did you notice I wrote 'any' bird-of-paradise. Because, for me, any sighting of a wild bird-of-paradise will do. These aren't boring birds. We are all familiar with them in some way or another. Have you ever glanced through a 'Family of Birds' or 'Birds of the World'- type book and come across illustrations of these, the most outrageously plumaged of all passerines? Or perhaps you've seen footage of their mating rituals – they're quite the dancers as well as dressers (go to YouTube if you haven't seen some of their performances).

And you have quite a selection – forty-something species of birds with colors and feathers that are truly hard to describe. The best I can do is give you some names and you seek out the images: King of Saxony Bird of Paradise; Raggiana Bird of Paradise; Superb Bird of Paradise; Wilson's Bird of Paradise; Western Parotia; Blue Bird of Paradise; Magnificent Riflebird (not as elegantly adorned as some of the others – but a courtship 'dance' that's riotous).

Remember – it is the MALES of the species that are the gorgeous ones. This is true for most all birds. Males must impress the females in some way, shape, or form. This is done through brilliant and elaborate plumages (think Peacock and, of course, the BoP's), alluring singing (think Nightingale or our own Hermit Thrush), dancing (Prairie-Chickens), or some combination of the above. Females, on the other hand, must sit on and safeguard the nest and young – better that she's drab and somewhat camouflaged.

However, in the world of animals, there are exceptions to the rules so there are a few BoP's that aren't exceptionally plumaged. It's an interesting evolutionary adaptation when you find out why. The extravagantly-plumaged males are *polygamous* – they mate with as many females as possible and thus offer no young-raising services.

The duller males of the BoP family (a group called Manucodes) are *monogamous* and *do* help around the nest - better to be boringly and cryptically colored than act as a bright neon sign saying “Eat at Joe's”!

Recorders Report – January 2013

A new year and new birds

Starting the New Year off right with the nice weather, birders were providing reports from all the central Oklahoma counties including several rare species. But the nice weather has a drawback with again only 2 days of rain during the month and the drought is projected to continue for another year or even three more years, water for human use is dwindling rapidly. Oklahoma City, Norman and surrounding cities are now on unheard of winter water rationing with further restriction being discussed. Meanwhile...

On the 1st Jason Shaw saw 24 Wild Turkeys, and a Northern Harrier at the USAO Habitat Area in Grady County; Joe Grzybowski noticed a Black Vulture over Lake Thunderbird; T K observed a Hermit Thrush at the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge and James Hubbell identified 4 Rusty Blackbirds at Lake Hefner's Lakeshore Park. On the 2nd Mary and Lou Truex birded Purcell Lake in McClain county and located Greater Scaup, Hermit Thrush, an at a Reservoir near E1490 and I-35 a group of Brewer's Blackbird. On the 2nd near Cottonwood Creek in Logan County, Christie Stoops had an Eastern Phoebe. At Waco and Stevens Road in Pottawatomie County Dala Grissom sited a Field Sparrow and on the 3rd a Pine Siskin. Pam Clower of Stillwater spotted an American White Pelican and mature Bald Eagle near Boomer Lake in Stillwater. Jim Arterburn and Ken Williams found two Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Lake Overholser, and at Lake Hefner Least Sandpipers and 2 Baird's Sandpipers.

On the 4th Victoria Kennedy saw a Pileated Woodpecker in her back yard near Choctaw. At Lake Hefner Joe Grzybowski walked out over the former lake bed at Prairie Dog Point to identify six gull species including Thayer's Gull, California Gulls, plus Forster's Terns, Wilson's Snipe, Common Mergansers, and two **Dunlin**. T K found both Winter and Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroat and Swamp Sparrow along South Jenkins, and Janet Landry had a Greater Roadrunner near downtown Oklahoma City.

Meanwhile, on the 4th Matt Jung reported a list of over 50 birds he had observed since the New Year began. On the 1st on the east side of Lake Overholser on a cold and windy day he located Snow Geese, Fox Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, and Carolina Wrens. On the 2nd along South Jenkins he found Jennifer Kidney birding ahead of him and to his surprise his first bird was a Barred Owl. He also discovered a Belted Kingfisher, Greater Yellowlegs and photographed in pristine plumage a puffed-up American Kestrel and a Red-shouldered Hawk. On the way home he stopped at the 'Longspur Field' and spotted Smith's Longspurs, Savannah Sparrows, and Lincoln Sparrows. On the 4th at Lake Hefner he viewed Northern Shovelers, Canvasbacks, and Bonaparte Gulls.

On the 5th Christ Clay discovered a Golden-crown Kinglet in Shawnee, and Valerie Bradshaw had a Brown Creeper, Bewick's Wren and American Tree Sparrow at west Stinchcomb WMA. On the 6th Jimmy Woodard found a Greater White-fronted Goose at Lake Overholser. John and Brandy Polo went to Lake Carl Blackwell and noticed a different shorebird, a **Purple Sandpiper**. This is only the second time this bird has been discovered in Oklahoma when John Shackford found one December 9-12, 1977 at Lake Overholser. It left during the afternoon of the 8th. Meanwhile, as a group was waiting to see it, per Jo Lloyd a **Rock Wren** popped up. On the 10th Bob and Donna Germany also spotted the Rock Wren and a Prairie Falcon. Christie Stoops located Wild Turkey and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Cottonwood Creek in Logan County, while James Hubbell had a Merlin south of Surry Hills and Lapland Longspur and American Pipit south of Piedmont.

On the 11th Zoe Cooper located a Brown Thrasher at Boomer Lake. On the 12th Hubert Hervey found Green-wing Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Killdeer, and Eastern Bluebird in Seminole County. Ben Barkley saw a Vesper Sparrow and Western Meadowlark at the University of OK Max Westheimer Airport. On the 13th Dala Grissom reported American White Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants at the Shawnee Twin Lakes. On the 14th Hollis Price NE of Jones had a lot of activity including a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and White-breasted Nuthatch. Kent Andersson flushed Northern Bobwhite near the Canadian River in Kingfisher County. On the 15th Sharon Henthorn spotted maybe a hundred Pintail Ducks at Lake Hefner. Kinsey Winters discovered a flock of Brewer's Blackbirds at Grey Snow Eagle House in Lincoln County. On the 16th Christopher Rustay located a Northern Harrier west of Hennessey; Lindell Dillon had a Redhead Duck and Greater Scaup at the Hallbrooke Addition in Norman; and Bill Diffin saw Pied-billed Grebe and Common Goldeneye along the dam at Lake Hefner.

On the 17th Alex James found a Pine Warbler and Chipping Sparrows at Lake Carl Blackwell. On the 18th Mary and Lou Truex saw a Ruddy Duck at Lake Overholser, and Joe had a Sharp-shinned Hawk at the Norman OU campus. On the 19th Matt Jung flushed about 15 Northern Bobwhites on the west Stinchcomb WMA trail, and Susan Thompson discovered a Greater Roadrunner near Lake Thunderbird. On the 20th Joe spotted a Loggerhead Shrike at the Norman Ten Mile Flats. On the 21st in Pottawatomie County Susan Thompson located a Red-breasted Nuthatch and Purple Finch; in Norman Joe noticed an Orange-crowned Warbler.

On the 31st Kristi Hendricks dropped by the OKC Zoo and at the lake she viewed Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, and Buffleheads. Sharon Henthorn also went to the zoo and just as darkness fell, 6 Great Egrets

flew into the trees to roost. In Stillwater John Polo left the house extra early to go owling and scored 2 Great Horned Owls and an Eastern Screech-Owl. A fantastic start for the year!! And so how many counties can you bird in during February especially during the Great Backyard Bird Count and beyond? For details see <http://www.birdsource.org>.

During January **133** bird species were reported making the 2013 year's total **133** 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. Esther M. Key, Editor.

A Side Benefit of Being a Birder

By Bob Holbrook

As most of you know, Dana and I do a lot of traveling. These days she's in Romania completing a second degree at the University of Bucharest—in Geology. So for Christmas this year I went and joined her for a month. (We spent Christmas in Istanbul but that's a whole other story.)

I met her Zoology professor and in our conversation, she found out I was a birder with a fair knowledge of European birds and immediately asked if I might help them a bit. I readily agreed. We went down to a basement room that had not had much attention in a VERY long time. There were tall glass-fronted cabinets full of a very old collection of mounted birds, many of them hawks and owls—all collected by the founder of the Biology Faculty back in the very early 1900's (I found dates from 1909-1925.) Most of the specimens had long ago lost their labels. They were dusty, some with mold, some bug-eaten, shelves were collapsing, glass was missing. In short it was a disaster. She told me that her predecessor had asked the leading Ornithologist in the country to come and re-label them. After about 5 minutes he gave up in disgust "because there are too many juvenile birds here, its too hard."

We moved the birds up to a well lighted room and I spent the next day and half cleaning, rearranging, and labeling. Since all the birds were of Romanian origin, it did not take a huge world knowledge of birds to figure them out. And I discovered something else—an advantage of being a birder over being an ornithologist. I know, and I don't want to start an argument right now... But as a birder, over the years I've learned to identify a lot of birds by the use of certain simple key points. I don't have to have exact detailed measurements of primary feathers, tarsi and claws...etc... you get the picture. I looked at rumps, tail markings, under-wing markings and completed labeling 97 specimens—it was really a lot of fun!! I left tags with both the scientific names and the Romanian common names for each. The professor was going to transfer the info to permanent labels. I then gave her some

ideas of how to care for them as I have to do with our specimens at the nature center at Wewoka Woods. She was most grateful and appreciative and excited! (And wants me to come back and give a lecture on who knows what as well as help lead a field trip to help students catch the passion of birding. But the Faculty does not have any binoculars to use for the students!)

Winter birding in Bucharest is a bit slow, except for a pair of Whooper Swans out of their normal winter range, there wasn't much around so the experience in the dungeons of the University were really a highlight.



In the photo, I am enjoying the results of the first day's work.

The Friends of Lake Overholser and the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge

If you are interested in getting involved in efforts to preserve and protect Lake Overholser and Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge, mark your calendar for the following events.

February 23, 2:00 pm -- first organizational meeting and election of officers for the Friends of Lake Overholser and the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge. Location is not yet determined, contact Karen Miles, tel: 702-8192 or email: FriendsOfLakeOverholser@Cox.net or watch the postings on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Lake-OverholserStinchcomb-Wildlife-Refuge/105680642809050>

April 6th, 8:30 am -- clean-up of Overholser and Stinchcomb. Meet at Overholser Pavilion at NW 14th and E Overholser Drive. Volunteers are needed for several staff positions: Team Leader, Rovers (drives a pickup and delivers supplies to teams, carries trash bags), Pavilion Staff Members (sign in and direct volunteers to team leaders, sort & weigh recyclables, help prepare lunch) and Photographers. OKC Kayaks will be donating use of their kayaks to clean the waterways. To clean-up via kayak contact Rodney Boegel at 405-802-3678. Free lunch for clean-up participants is being provided by Earl's Rib Place at 12:30 pm. Participants will need to fill out a volunteer form.

April 20th, 8:30 am, meet at Overholser Pavilion -- second clean-up to cover areas missed on April 6th. Details same as April 6th clean-up.

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

Field Trip Schedule 2013

Check with Mark Delgrosso or the website/ newsletter for updates and final scheduling

March 5: Woodcock Courtship at Draper: meet at Lupe's Restauarant, 1000 S. Douglas in Midwest City at 5-5:15 PM
Leader: Jimmy Woodard (405 365 5685)

March 13 -23: Tufted Jay Preserve, Mazatlan, MEXICO: see some of Mexico's beautiful endemic birdlife, including the gorgeous Tufted Jay, at the eponymous reserve outside Mazatlan. This is a chance for some exotic lifers plus possible beach R&R in historic Mazatlan. *Coordinator/Leader:* Mark Delgrosso (405 470 4533/ medelgrosso@gmail.com)

March 29—31 Southwest Oklahoma: We will explore the far southwest part of the state. *Leader:* Jimmy Woodard 405 365 5685

April 11-14: Lesser Prairie Chicken Festival/ Woodward: this festival gives birders a chance to see the Lessers on their leks with possible trips to view Greater as well – both Prairie Chickens in one weekend – not a bad deal! For more info. go to: www.lekstrek.org

April 20: Hackberry Flat Day/Frederick: a variety of activities are on offer, from birding tours to crawdad fishing to wetland hay rides. Contact the Hackberry Flat Center (405 990 4977) for more information.

April 26-28: OOS Spring Meeting: this Spring's meeting will be in McCurtain Co. with field excursions to the McCurtain Co. Wilderness (for Red-Cockadedes), Little River NWR, and Red Slough. Actual meeting site TBA.

May 5-8: 4th Annual Red Slough Birding Convention/ Red Slough: tours of Red Slough, Little River NWR, and the McCurtain Co. Wilderness are on tap during this wildlife extravaganza. A registration fee is required – go to: www.redsloughconvention.com for further details.

late May [Memorial Day weekend]: Salt Plains and Quivira Nat'l Wildlife Refuges: explore the goings-on at Salt Plains and then onto Kansas and Quivira for possible breeding Black Rails. *Leader:* Mark Delgrosso (405 470 4533/ medelgrosso@gmail.com)

June: Club Picnic at Draper
