



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

OCTOBER 2019

Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity tree and orientation selection

Jared Elmore will be the guest presenter at the October 21 meeting of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society.

For this talk Jared will present briefly on some of the background knowledge that is known about Red-cockaded Woodpeckers including range and declines. Then he'll talk about their habitat selection at both the stand and tree levels. Jared will also present some data from his colleague Matt Fullerton on tree specifics on the western edge of their range and some data from a study they conducted evaluating their potential use of scent-concealing airflow variables in tree and orientation selection.

Jared is a Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Oklahoma State University. His research focus is large scale avian conservation issues in the Great Plains. He is originally from St. Stephens, a small town in southwestern Alabama. His bachelor's and master's degrees were earned at the University of South Alabama.

Jared and his wife Kelsey have one son, Miles, and two dachshunds. In his spare time he enjoys birding, climbing, hunting, fishing, biking, camping, reading, watching football, and spending time with his family.

Our meetings are held September through June on the third Monday of each month (with the exception of January, when the meeting is held on the fourth Monday). Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Visitors are always welcome.

Meeting Location:

Our meetings are held at the Will Rogers Garden center, located at the intersection of NW 36th Street and I-44.



President's Perspective



By Betz Hacker

Greetings

Fall migration is in full swing. I was over at Lake Hefner the day before the recent temperature drop and the avian activity was frantic. Pods of migrating pelicans were flying over and landing on the lake, a group of black-necked stilts were probing the shoreline, Nashville warblers, wrens, and many birds were

actively moving about.

Field Trips

I've learned that a number of members are not getting emails about field trips. There will be a sign-up sheet at the next meeting for those who want to receive emails on up-coming field trips but are not receiving them. They should be posted on our website (okc-audubon.org) so during migration season, it's a good idea to check it daily.

Thanks to OCAS volunteers (Hal Yocum, Grace Huffman, Jimmy Woodard and Nadine Varner), there have been 4 productive field trips so far this month. We logged a good number of birders at Mitch Park (September 28), and even more birds at Lake Hefner (October 6) and at Lake Overholser (October 12). Jimmy Woodard and Nadine Varner hosted their annual Big Sit (October 16).

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the September 21 public gathering at Will Rogers Park. This event was announced in the OKC Utility Bill mailing as a Park activity and despite the wind and rain, 20 people showed up. Our volunteers braved the weather and everyone had a great time. Thanks to Nancy Vicars, Brian Muzny, Patty Muzny, Hal Yocum, Sharon Henthorn, and Terri Underhill for leading small groups. While only 3 birds were seen, participants were introduced to birding, instructed on how to use binoculars, and everyone but the birds enjoyed it. Your volunteer hours contribute to off-set the cost of our meeting room rental!

OOS Meeting, October 25-27

I always look forward to the spring and fall OOS meeting, especially when they are close to home. It's a opportunity to learn from professional ornithologists. This year, two keynote addresses will be given by Dr. David Pavlacky of the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies and Dr. Kira Delmore of Texas A&M. I particularly like the field trips because I always see so

many more birds. This year OOS will be held on the OU campus in Norman on Oct. 25-27. The the Keynote speakers are experts in their field, the meetings provide current research, and the annual dinner and silent auction are always a lot of fun. For more information, visit their website okbirds.org/2019_OOS_Fall_Meeting, or email Nadine Varner gallinuleofpurple@yahoo.com

Volunteers

OCAS relies on member volunteers to continue its mission to the birding community. Dave and Sue Woodson recently retired. As conservation chairman, Dave gave presentations, shared his beautiful photos, wrote many newsletter articles, and kept OCAS up to date on environmental issues. Sue organized volunteers to bring snacks and drinks to OCAS monthly meetings. Their many years of contributions are much appreciated and while it was a challenge to replace them, two members have stepped up.

OCAS new Conservation Chair is Ann Sherman and Terri Underhill has volunteered to organize meeting snacks and drinks. THANK YOU!



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

Officers 2019

President	Elizabeth Hacker	638-6210
Vice President	Grace Huffman	388-7369
Secretary	Sharon Henthorn	521-9958
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars	831-1945
Parliament	Valerie Bradshaw	664-6956
Programs	Warren Harden	596-2759
Recorder	Esther M. Key	735-1021
Conservation	Ann Sherman	410-8656
Field Trips	Nancy Vicars	831-1945
	Jimmy Woodard	365-5685
	Hal Yokum	819-4852
	Bob Holbrook	496-1731
Newsletter Editor	Patricia Velte	751-5263
Publicity	Doug Eide	495-8192
Historian	Vacant	
Refreshments	Terri Underhill	844-1244
Webmaster	Patricia Velte	751-5263

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

For up-to-date Oklahoma City Audubon news visit:
OKC-Audubon.org

Christmas Mountain Oasis

By Patti Muzny

On August 25th, after enjoying the Fort Davis Hummingbird Festival in Fort Davis, Texas, Steve Davis, Mary Lane, Nancy Vicars and Nancy Reed and I headed south toward the Christmas Mountains, which are near Terlingua, Texas. Nancy Reed had visited this Oasis in 2018, and she recommended we drive up the mountain to watch the hummingbirds and other species that are attracted to the water and trees.

There were also hummingbird feeders and seed feeders and a partially shaded viewing area.

Christmas Mountain Oasis – sounds like a cool, moist place to hang out at the end of August just a few miles north of Terlingua, Texas, and Big Bend National Park, right? Well....

The Christmas Mountains are desert mountains. The desert in August is not cool. The temperature was over 100 degrees and the “road,” well; the road was another

challenge for vehicles without 4-wheel drive. Nancy V. was driving her Honda CRV and Steve and Mary were following in their Honda CRV. We picked our way over rocks and “wash-outs” and along steep ravines and were beginning to think maybe we had taken a wrong turn somewhere. Every now and then tires would spin and slip a little on the steep parts. CRV’s are capable of more than one would think, although there were a



few times when Nancy and Steve most certainly questioned our wisdom. There was no place to turn around, so we just kept creeping along until at last we saw the turn for the Oasis.

At last, we were safely parked at this extremely fascinating area and digging out our cool water from the ice chest. I think it must have been 115 in the shade, but at least we had shade. And birds! At the little cement pond, we found Blue-winged Teal. Blue-winged Teal in the middle of a desert??? Steve has photos! As we sat in the chairs under a shade arbor, we watched families of Scaled Quail come to the feeder. And, perhaps the most striking visitor to our oasis was a male Varied Bunting. It landed on the feeder right in front of us. Then a male Blue Grosbeak appeared. Lucifer Hummingbirds were feeding so close to us that we could feel the air stirred up by their wings! Other hummingbirds were Black-chinned and Ruby-throated.



From left: Nancy Reed, Nancy Vicars, Patti Muzny, Steve Davis and Mary Lane

Not only did we delight in watching the hummingbirds, we also found a Pyrrhuloxia, Cassin’s Kingbird, Kestrel, White-winged Dove, House Finch, Curved-billed Thrasher, Canyon Towhee, Black-throated Sparrow, Bell’s Vireo, Mourning Dove, Common Raven and a Mockingbird.

Although it was difficult to leave this oasis, the only way to Terlingua and our home for the next few days was back the way we had come -- down the 4-wheel drive road. As we prepared to go back to our cars, I heard Nancy Vicars say

something like, “I’ll give Patti Muzny \$100 to drive my car back down that road!!” Patti Muzny didn’t need a monetary incentive to drive back down that road – I actually enjoy off-roading and driving around on crazy mountain roads! I happily slid in behind the wheel and we carefully negotiated every rock, wash-out and every turn without any issues. We located our lovely Airbnb home just outside of Terlingua and began the Big Bend National Park segment of our birding adventures.



Bird of the Month

By Grace Huffman

It may be fall, but I just have to write about one of my favorite summer birds: the Green Heron. Seen here in central Oklahoma until late October, I most recently saw one a couple of weeks ago (as of this writing) while

birding in the area around Mitch Park.

Green Herons are one of my favorite birds because I think they look quite goofy. They're small, stocky herons that often like to hold their heads so close to their bodies they look like they have no neck. They are a dark green-gray on the back, and rusty on the front. Add on their bright orange or yellow eyes, and that completes the funky look.



These herons arrive here in early April, where they spend their days along the shores of lakes, ponds, marshes, and the like. They tend to stay right at the edge of the water hunting fish, unlike their larger cousins who wade in deeper. Because they like to stay so close to the shore, they can be hard to see amongst the grasses and other aquatic plants growing at water level.

During the breeding season, males choose the nest site within their territory, a secluded place that may be overhanging the water, but once he gets it started the female then finishes the nest. Here the female lays her clutch of 3-5 eggs, where she incubates them for up to 3 weeks.

Then it's another 2 1/2 weeks before the young leave the nest. In places where it's warm enough, they may even raise a second brood.

The one I saw near Mitch Park I initially thought was a piece of trash on first glance, but on closer inspection I could see the dark back and top of the head. Even then, it took me a few seconds to realize that it wasn't some strange crow and was in fact a Green Heron. It didn't look like a typical heron as it kept itself very compact, and it did indeed appear like it had no neck. The bird was fascinating to watch as it stalked along the shore of the pond, where it even caught a small fish. This was one of the rare times I got to actually enjoy looking at the bird, as most of the time when I see Green Herons they are flying, so I'm not able to get much more than an identifying look.

Green Herons are highly intelligent, so much so that they are one of the few known birds to use tools. When

hunting, it will use insects, plant bits, and even bread crusts to bait the fish into coming to the surface so the heron can catch lunch! The one at Mitch Park seemed pretty adept at catching his food without the use of tools though. Another interesting fact: according to allaboutbirds.org, the oldest known Green Heron was at least 7 years and 11 months old when it was found in Mexico. It had initially been banded here in Oklahoma.

While common (although hard to see at times), Green Herons are in decline. While they were hunted as food in the past, today the likely reason is habitat loss as humans develop the ponds and other bodies of water where they frequent.

Refreshments

Refreshments for our October 21 meeting will be provided by:

Snacks: Cheryl Allen and Martha Hordinsky

Drinks: Randy Henthorn

OKC Audubon Society minutes of September 16, 2019

Meeting was called to order by President Betz Hacker. The minutes of the June meeting were approved without changes. Guests Eldon Williams and Carla Wisdom were introduced.

Ann Sherman is the new conservation chairman, as Dave Woodson has stepped down.

Terri Underhill is the new refreshments chairman, as Sue Woodson has stepped down.

Nancy Vicars, Treasurer, reports a bank account balance of \$6310.

The group was allowed to share their stories and sightings from the summer.

There was no old business to discuss. The only new business discussed relates to upcoming events. The club has already scheduled September 21, this Saturday for its first field trip at Will Rogers Park. Twenty novice birders have signed up for a guided walk led by Audubon members. The time we volunteer for the park earns us credit on the rent for our monthly meetings. We already have volunteer leaders in Terri Underhill, Nancy Vicars, Hal Yocum, Brian and Patti Muzny and myself.

Another planned field trip is for the following Saturday the 28th, weather-permitting at Mitch Park in Edmond, to be led by Hal Yocum, who is a regular park visitor. Birders are to meet at the Old Bagel Shop east of Kelley on Covell at 7:45am, and hope to leave shortly thereafter for the nearby city park.

October 10th is a date planned, weather-permitting, for an unofficial Big Sit at the home of Jimmy and Nadine Woodard in Midwest City.

The meeting adjourned for a busy and active intermission, with members getting up-to-date on each other's summers. After the snack break, we were treated to an entertaining and colorful presentation of birding in Panama by Professor Jeff Cox, who visited the remnants of the Pan-American Highway and some eco-lodges in 2017.

The next meeting will be Monday the 21st of October at 7pm here at the Will Rogers Park Garden Center.

Club Secretary, Sharon Henthorn

Conservation News

By Ann Sherman

The *NYTimes* printed an article that said nearly one-third of the wild birds in the United States and Canada have vanished since 1970. The disappearance of 2.9 billion birds over the past 50 years was reported in the journal *Science*. The Red-Winged Blackbird population has declined by 92 million. A quarter of Blue Jays have disappeared along with almost half of all Baltimore Orioles.



This is shocking and depressing and feels like the canary in the coal mine has died. What can be done? I'm going to skip the write your congressperson and give money to a good cause. I'm going to ask everyone to personally make a difference.

What can one person do? Turns out....quite a bit. Plant a tree. Plant flowers. Get rid of some grass and put in something friendly to birds and bees. Make sure you have native vegetation in your yard. Contribute to planting natives along our highways. Compost. Use your veggie scraps to make your gardens more friendly to your visitors...bugs...bees...birds...they all need our help.

The Master Gardeners are having composting classes. I will warn you they encourage you to have worm beds in your kitchens or under the bed. I'm still mulling that over. Currently I toss the scraps out the back door into a flower garden and they decompose over time. I may have to get more organized on this.

You could drive more instead of taking a plane. Visit old chums along the way. I just did that. You see more of the country from a car window than from a plane and you could do a little to save our planet...plus drop in on old bosses and college chums. What a great time can be had on the road.

Eat less meat. We are burning down forests to make way for animals to graze.

This list comes from Covering Climate Now, a global collaboration of 250 news outlets. Here are their tips to save the Earth.

1. **Conserve Water.** Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth. Don't drink bottled water. Use a refillable bottle to carry water.

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Recorders Report September 2019

The ducks and winter birds are arriving as the last of the summer birds are leaving. What an exciting time to be birding. As the days become shorter and cooler, remember bugs, i.e. bird food, like to live in leaf litter and garden plants. What plants are in your yard that are being used by pollinators and birds?



New species for our year list from previous months include: on April 6th Joe Grzybowski discovered **Long-billed Curlew** at Lake Thunderbird Alameda Bridges in Cleveland County; and on May 21st Jared

Elmore noticed **Ring-necked Pheasant** in a field on the south side of McElroy in Payne County.

On the 1st Bridger Arrington located Prothonotary Warbler and Warbling Vireo at South Muhall in Logan County. On the 2nd Caleb McKinney spotted Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Common Nighthawk and Indigo Bunting on 90 acres of hunting land in Grady County; Aaron Milligan tallied Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Tern, Upland Sandpiper and Semipalmated Sandpiper south of Hwy 33 in Kingfisher County; and Mike Yough encountered Buff-breasted Sandpiper near the Botanical Garden at OSU Stillwater. On the 3rd Jared Elmore got Peregrine Falcon in Stillwater.

On the 4th Deb Hirt identified Alder Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler at Boomer Lake Park – Heron Cove. On the 6th Braden Farris counted Stilt Sandpiper at Howard Farms in Oklahoma County. On the 7th Shane Clark viewed Greater Roadrunner near Chandler in Lincoln County; Roy McGraw reported Yellow Warbler and Barn Swallow at Rose Lake in Canadian County; and Deb Hirt recognized Willow Flycatcher at Boomer Lake Park. On the 11th D&D Norris observed Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Black Vulture at Kairworks Garden in Logan County.



On the 13th Scott Loss and Caleb McKinney confirmed **Common Tern** at Lake Carl Blackwell; Joe Grzybowski detected Swainson's Hawk and Lark Sparrow



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along Ladd Road in McClain County; and Brian Stufflebeam came across Snowy Egret, and Blue-winged Teal at Lake Overholser. On the 14th Blue-headed Vireo and American Redstart were reported at Lake Thunderbird – Alameda Drive; and Larry Mays saw Orchard and Baltimore Oriole at Lake Hefner – Hobie Point. On the 15th Brian Marra verified **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, Empidonax Flycatcher, and Red-eyed Vireo at Arcadia Lake. In Norman Nu Perera with John Muller and Luis Cueto found Inca Dove and White-breasted Nuthatch at 48th Avenue, and Zach DuFran documented Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Blue Grosbeak along South Jenkins.

On the 18th John Muller had Ovenbird, Chimney Swift, Bell's Vireo, American Redstart and Yellow-throated Warbler along South Jenkins in Norman; in McClain County Larry Mays added Northern Bobwhite, Ruby-throated Hummingbird and Black-and-white Warbler; at Lake Hefner – Stars and Stripes Park Roy McGraw recorded Yellow-billed Cuckoo. In Payne County Scott Loss identified Pine Warbler and Yellow-throated Warbler at Lake Carl Blackwell, and Anna Nesterovich heard Sedge Wren at the OSU – Cross Country Course. On the 20th Brian Marra observed Eastern Screech-Owl, Osprey, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Wilson's Warbler and Pine Siskin at Bell Cow Lake in Lincoln County. On the 21st Caspian Tern was reported at Lake Thunderbird East Sentinel. On the 22nd Daniel Martin found Canada Goose and Mallard in Seminole County.

On the 24th Joe Grzybowski viewed American Avocet, Long-billed Dowitcher, White-faced Ibis, and Stilt Sandpiper at Morgan Road east of Rose Lake, and along 10 Mile Flats in Cleveland County about 270 Killdeer, 150 Cattle Egret, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Wilson's Snipe. At Lake Hefner – South Marina Bill Diffin confirmed Red-headed Woodpecker, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Warbling Vireo; and at Sanborn Lake Caleb McKinney discovered Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo and

Warbling Vireo, and Gray Catbird. On the 25th Landon Neumann noticed **Magnolia Warbler** at Couch Park; John Tharp detected Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Brown Thrasher, Yellow Warbler and Indigo Bunting in Norman. On the 26th in Norman John Moyer documented Black-throated Green Warbler; and Joe Grzybowski had Broad-winged Hawk; while in Stillwater at Sanborn Lake Caleb McKinney got Mourning Warbler.

On the 27th Braden Farris recognized Turkey Vulture in Garvin County, Black Vulture in McClain County, and south of Lake Hefner House Wren, and Olive-sided Flycatcher. On the 28th Tammy Lee located American Bittern at Lake Hefner. At Lake Thunderbird East Sentinel Peregrine Falcon, American Avocet, Common Tern and Black Tern were reported. In Payne County Zach Roy encountered Hairy Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Lincoln's Sparrow and Eastern Wood-Pewee at Lake Carl Blackwell; in Stillwater Landon Neumann spotted Black-and-white Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler and Wilson's Warbler; and at Couch Park Mike Yough added Northern Parula and Summer Tanager.

On the 29th in Norman John Muller tallied **Inca Dove** on 48th Avenue in Norman; and Tricia Brown saw Summer Tanager at Deer Creek Road. At USAO Habitat Area near Chickasaw Jason Shaw counted Scissor-tailed Flycatcher; Brian Stufflebeam spotted Osprey and Mississippi Kite at Lake Hefner; and John Hurd noticed Common Yellowthroat, Green Heron and Belted Kingfisher at Dolese Lake. As the final killing frost approaches, it is time to plan for winter birds and their needs. What plant can you add to your yard this year?

In the Central Oklahoma area during the summer of 2019, **164** species were reported with **6** new species bringing the total for the year to **275**. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds. Information is accessed at: [ebird](http://ebird.org). 2019 eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org/subnational1/US-OK/region>. (Accessed: September 30, 2019). And occasionally from Facebook and the OKBIRDS List. I can be contacted by e-mail at emkok@earthlink.net. Esther M. Key, Editor.

In Loving Memory

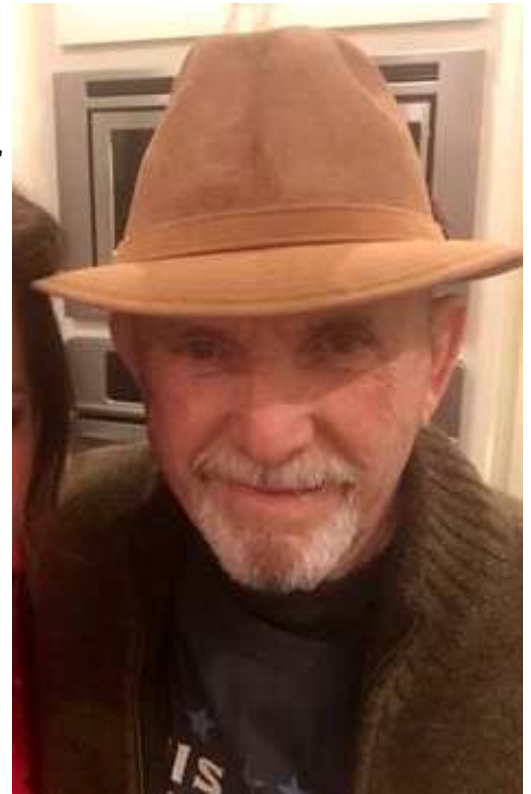
Max L. Fuller

May 10, 1935 – October 6, 2019

Max passed away at his home surrounded by family and friends on Sunday, October 6, 2019.

He was born on May 10, 1935 in Yukon, OK. to Ernest & Delma Fuller. He Graduated in 1953 from El Reno High School. He was a longtime Canadian County area resident. He served in the Army from 1956-1958.

Max married Theleda Annette Norman on June 2, 1959. Max was a Railroad Engineer for 44 years working in El Reno, Enid, and Wichita Falls. He was a lifelong member of the First Christian Church. He was also active in El Reno Mobile Meals for 22 years, a member of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society and the El Reno Bass Club. His hobbies were fishing, hunting, wood-working and birding, and recently collecting treasures. The Oklahoma City Audubon Society sends its condolences to Theleda, his wife of 60 years, and their family.



Welcome

Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes

Jacob Crissup, Oklahoma City, OK

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

Conservation (cont.)

2. **Be Car-conscious.** Combine trips. Maintain your car. Tires inflated to the proper pressure can improve your gas mileage by 0.6 to 3%.
3. **Walk, Bike or take Public transit.**
4. **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.** Use the bin to recycle. Take cloth bags shopping. Avoid using disposable plates, spoons, glass, cups, and napkins.
5. **Composting.** What you compost doesn't end up in a landfill and it makes a great natural fertilizer.
6. **Switch to LEDs.** LEDs are super efficient. They cost more but last longer.
7. **Live more efficiently** Make your home more energy efficient. Replace old windows and make sure your home is properly insulated. OG&E has programs to help make your home more efficient.
8. **Eat Sustainable foods.** Buy from farmers that conserve natural resources. Eat more whole grains, veggies , fruits and nuts. Some people grow their own gardens! I am shallow and only do flowers.
9. **Plant a tree** (or two or three) One young tree can absorb CO2 at a rate of 13 pounds per tree. Every single year. When a tree reaches about 10 years old it can absorb 48 pounds of CO2 per year.
10. **Give up plastics** The statistics are shocking: People around the world [buy 1 million plastic drinking bottles](#) every minute, and use up to 5 trillion single-use plastic bags every year.

If we all do what we can to help we can make a difference. We can't wait for someone to come save us...the Lone Ranger was fiction. We need to do what we can to save ourselves. We have the power to make something happen. If everyone does a little it adds up to a lot.

And keep your bird feeders clean.
