



Oklahoma City Audubon Society

OKC-AUDUBON.ORG

SEPTEMBER 2018

Mary & Steve's Excellent Adventure in Belize

Mary Lane and Steve Davis will present the program at the September 17 meeting of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society.

Mary and Steve have been members of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society since 2010, shortly after Steve's retirement from state government and Mary's retirement from medical research. After a few years of getting their feet wet with in-state and neighboring-state birding, they began participating in birding trips (usually with Oklahoma and Arkansas birders) to countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean. They have enjoyed the scenery, birds and other wildlife, local culture and cuisine, and the camaraderie of other birders in every country they have visited. In March of last year, they spent eight days birding in Belize.



Belize, formerly British Honduras, is a nation on the eastern coast of Central America with a humid, subtropical climate. It is bordered on the north by Mexico, on the west and south by Guatemala, and by the Caribbean Sea to the east. The west of Belize is dense jungle, and offshore to the east are small barrier islands called cayes (pronounced keys). Both areas are rich with bird life. Over eight days, Mary and Steve traveled with their group to wildlife and archeological preserves in the west, then to a coastal wildlife sanctuary, and finally visited one of the caves offshore. They will share a sampling of their photos and memories of Belize at the September OCAS meeting.

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 Betsy Hacker

Greetings

Welcome back! I trust you all saw many of the usual and rare birds that were in Oklahoma over the summer. When I moved to OKC eight years ago, I didn't think there would be many birds here because OK isn't a well known birding destination. Over the years, I have been very impressed by the birds I found here and wonder why it isn't a better known destination.



Field Trips

September 22: 8:00-9:30 am Will Roger's Gardens. This walk is open to the public and was included in the OKC Utility mailing. It would be nice to have some experienced birders walk with those new to birding.

OOS Meeting. October 19-21 at University of Central Oklahoma, Howell Hall.

OCAS is still in need of a field trip coordinator. Field trips and monthly meetings are what makes OCAS a vibrant club, so please consider volunteering. Watch the website for field trip updates.

Lake Overholser Cofferdam

Recently, the vegetation has been cleared from the cofferdam at Lake Overholser. Members have mentioned that the club once maintain prothonotary warbler nesting boxes both along the cofferdam and at the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge. This would be an ideal time to build or purchase new houses and place them over the winter so they would be ready in the spring.

Bluebird Houses

Over the summer, Neil Garrison and I monitored the 6 bluebird houses that OCAS volunteers placed in the northwest corner of Will Rogers Park this past spring. Neil kept them clean of wasps and ants as I held the ladder. Although we didn't see any bluebirds, according to Neil it often it takes a season or two before the bluebirds will build a nest in new boxes. Park staff is committed to adding plants that will attract pollinators while providing cover and nesting

habitat. They also have reduced the use of pesticides and not mowed as extensively along drainage areas. These changes are making a difference because already there are more birds in the park.

Display

The Fall OCAS display in the Will Rogers Garden Center is up and looks great. The beautiful eye catching owl photos and sculptures were provided by Terri Underhill and the owl box is on loan from Hollis and Mark Price. OCAS earned 10 hours of volunteer time for putting the display together. Volunteer hours off-set the cost for our meeting room which in turn, keeps our membership dues low.

It's not too early to begin thinking about our winter display. Bob Holbrook and Nathan Kuhnert, both stamp collectors, have suggested that they would like to do a future display on bird stamps! Other bird display ideas are welcome especially if they involve volunteering to work on the display.

A big thanks to all who have contributed to making OCAS a club that attracts and welcomes birders. THANK YOU!

Oklahoma City Audubon Society

Officers 2018

President	Elizabeth Hacker	638-6210
Vice President	John Shackford	340-5057
Secretary	Sharon Henthorn	521-9958
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars	831-1945
Parliament	Ted Golden	354-3619
Programs	Warren Harden	596-2759
Recorder	Esther M. Key	735-1021
Conservation	Dave Woodson	601-622-3467
Field Trips	Betz Hacker	638-6210
Newsletter Editor	Pat Velte	751-5263
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 up-to-date Oklahoma City Audubon news visit:
OKC-Audubon.org

Bird of the Month



By John Shackford

The Wilson's Phalarope

(*Phalaropus tricolor*) is named after the early American ornithologist Alexander Wilson (1766-1813). There are three species of phalaropes: in addition to Wilson's, are the Red-necked and the Red phalaropes. The Wilson's Phalarope nests only in North America, while the

other two species nest circumpolar. The Wilson's Phalarope usually chooses freshwater lakes and ponds, both on its nesting and wintering grounds, rather than seacoasts. Its winter range is not well understood, but it is in the southwestern part of South America.

In Oklahoma the Wilson's Phalarope is found primarily as a migrant—Sutton (1967. *Oklahoma Birds*) gives migratory dates as from March 23-June 6 and from July 1-September 24, being more common in spring than fall. Population-wise they are found most commonly in the Oklahoma Panhandle (where it is sometimes seen by the dozens or even hundreds), and tapering off eastward to central Oklahoma, with additional sporadic reports even further east. In central Oklahoma they have been seen most frequently at Rose Lake, John Newell having turned in most of the records [1982, Sutton, summaries of Oklahoma bird species, Wilson's phalarope, unpublished data].

In reading Bent (*Life histories of North American shore birds*. 1927, part 1. Dover Publ., Inc. N.Y., NY), I was surprised that the Wilson's Phalarope had been found nesting (rarely) in Meade County, southwestern Kansas, adjacent to Beaver County in the Oklahoma Panhandle. Another record also raised my interest in possible nesting in Oklahoma: on August 21, 1970 Sutton and Best [1982, Sutton cited above] reported four "young" at the Boise City sewage ponds; these were no doubt flighted birds, because Sutton certainly would have made more of the record if they had been too young to fly.

All of this led me to try to find out exactly where the nesting range of the species is, and I was totally surprised when a page from the *Breeding Bird Atlas of Texas* (R. C. Tweit,

(2009), Wilson's Phalarope, The Texas Breeding Bird Atlas. Texas A&M University System, College Station and Corpus Christi, TX) jumped onto my computer screen showing three confirmed nest records in the Texas Panhandle. These records were in the southern one-half of the Texas Panhandle, well south of the Oklahoma Panhandle. That atlas also listed the *Breeding Bird Atlas of Oklahoma* as a reference (2004. B. L. Gall, Wilson's Phalarope, In Oklahoma breeding bird atlas, pp. 156-157, D. L. Reinking, ed., University of Oklahoma Press, Norman). I went to this work and found a write-up by Gall which gave three probable nesting sites, one in each of the Oklahoma Panhandle counties, and one confirmed record for northeastern Cimarron County; there was, however, some ambiguity about this confirmed record and Gall commented that nesting in Oklahoma needed further research. I was totally amazed at this record. For many years I had worked

on breeding bird species in Cimarron County and had never even considered the possibility of Wilson's Phalaropes nesting there! With the Texas and Oklahoma records mentioned above, I think we should be watching Hackberry Flats (a restored wildlife area in the southwestern part of Oklahoma), the Great Salt Plains Refuge, and of course the Oklahoma Panhandle, particularly Cimarron County, for nesting Wilson's Phalaropes.



The Wilson's Phalarope has an unusual mating pattern: they are polyandrous, whereby the female selects more than one male partner during a season. And very interestingly, the female is the brightly-colored sex of the species and she performs the normal courtship functions, rather than the males, as in most other bird species: she leaves a male with nest building (usually rudimentary), incubation of eggs, and care of the young. Thus, the female only lays eggs

(usually four), then quickly moves on to pursue nesting with a second male, the female again leaving all nesting duty to a second male. The advantage of this mating system is that the female can produce two broods in about the same amount of time it normally takes to complete only about one-and-a-half nests in most other species. This is a very significant change because the length of the breeding season in the far north is so short that nesting time is at a premium, and "half a nesting" in the far north actually means no second nesting at all.

Although the Wilson's Phalarope feeds primarily on shore or while wading in the water, they have an interesting behavior while floating on water: they spin in small, tight circles, stirring up small food that they can pick up to eat (this behavior is very useful in identifying phalaropes in general). Bent (cited earlier) gives one study of this phalarope's food that found 43.1% was animal and 24.4% was vegetable.

Join the Wildlife Conservation Effort



2018-2019 Federal Duck Stamp, featuring a pair of mallards, art by Bob Hautman of Delano, Minn. Credit: USFWS

Buying Federal Duck Stamps is among the simplest ways that anyone can participate in wildlife and habitat conservation. Duck Stamps are a required annual purchase for waterfowl hunters 16 and older, and a current duck stamp grants the bearer free entrance into any national wildlife refuge that charges an entry fee. But whether you are a hunter, birder or other outdoors enthusiast or you simply want to help preserve our natural resources for future generations to enjoy, you can contribute to conservation by buying Duck Stamps.

Because nearly all of the proceeds are used to conserve habitat for birds and other wildlife, birders, nature photographers and other outdoor enthusiasts buy Duck Stamps to help ensure that they can always see wildlife at their favorite outdoors spots.



2018-2019 Junior Duck Stamp featuring an emperor goose by Rayen Kang of Johns Creek, Ga

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program is a dynamic art- and science-based curriculum that teaches wetland and waterfowl conservation to students in kindergarten through high school. The program encourages students to explore their natural world, invites them to investigate biology and wildlife management principles and challenges them to express and share what they have learned with others.

The winning artwork from a national art contest serves as the design for the Junior Duck Stamp, which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service produces annually. This \$5 stamp has become a much sought after collector's item. One hundred percent of the revenue from the sale of Junior Duck stamps goes to support recognition and environmental education activities for students who participate in the program.

How old is that in bird years?

Do we have a way to equate birds' life spans to human years? Perhaps we don't need one. It is surprising to learn that some wild birds have been recorded to have lived a very long time. We know about the 66-year-old Albatross on Midway Island but what about closer to home? Here are some banding records for locations in the Lower 48. Many of these birds were still alive when the banding recapture was recorded.

Bald Eagle—NY—38 years, 00 months
Sandhill Crane—WY—36 years, 07 months
Arctic Tern—ME—34 years, 00 months
Western Gull—CA—33 years, 11 month
Canada Goose—OH—33 years, 03 month

Atlantic Puffin—ME—33 years, 01 month
Golden Eagle—UT—31 years, 08 months
Royal Tern—NC—30 years, 11 months
Mourning Dove—30 years, 04 months
Ashy Storm-Petrel—CA—30 years, 00 months
Common Loon—MI—29 years, 10 months
Red-tailed Hawk—MD—29 years, 09 months
Caspian Tern—MI—29 years, 07 months
Herring Gull—ID—29 years, 03 months
California Gull—CA—28 years, 03 months
Great Horned Owl—OH—28 years, 00 months
Brown Pelican—SC—27 years, 10 months

Minutes June 18, 2018

Meeting was called to order by President Elizabeth Hacker.

Guests on hand included Donna Cline, Saleem Saluhuddin, Clarissa Sharp, and Micah Friedman.

Minutes of the May meeting were approved without changes.

Treasurer's report: Nancy Vicars reports \$5710.15 in the account after reimbursement for picnic supplies and newsletter expenses.

Conservation topics: My notes are incomplete regarding an upcoming cooperation meeting of conservationists from Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. to be held on June 26-27. RSVP by June 22.

Planned field trips: Neil Garrison will lead a field trip on June 19 (day after the meeting). Meet 8:30 am at the Senior Center of Will Rogers Park.

Report on upgrade of Will Rogers Park for birding: Neil Garrison spoke of owl boxes in addition to land-scaping changes and bluebird boxes. The park is also considering adding martin houses.

Horace Mann School is establishing a hummingbird garden.

OOS President-Elect Bill Diffin announced the fall meeting of the Oklahoma Ornithological Society is to be held at UCO October 19-21.

Jerry Taylor reported progress on his visiting red-bellied woodpecker with the deformed bill. The bird is healthy and seems to have no problem eating despite the increasing bill length and deformity.

The meeting was adjourned and a brief refreshment break followed.

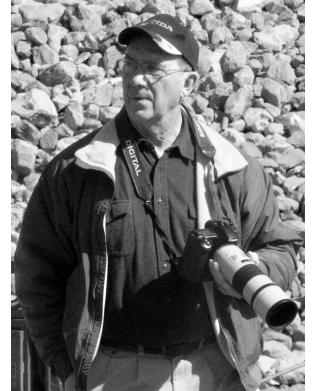
We were entertained by John Cleal with photos and stories of the visit he and Marion Homier took to Southern Chile, Falkland Islands, and Antarctica in January 2018.

There will be no meetings of the OKC Audubon Society in July or August. Meetings will resume September 17th at the WRP garden exposition building at 7:00 pm.

Sharon Henthorn, club secretary

Conservation Report

Fall is just around the corner which means OCAS members will gather to "brag" about their birding experiences this past summer. I always enjoy the programs and speakers Warren Harden finds each month for our meetings. In addition it is always nice renewing friendships and learning where I should have been to view those rare birds that visit our State. When I do attend field trips it is my luck someone in the group will say "You should have been here 5 minutes ago." Oh well, that's a fact of life of any birder and I'm sure many of you have had similar experiences.



As Conservation Chairperson, I would like to bring to your attention the fact that "The Endangered Species Act is under attack!" Our Washington representatives have proposed cuts that will slash protections for threaten species, like Sage-Grouse, Bald Eagle, Brown Pelican and other species. These Dangerous cut remove requirements that scientists be consulted before approval to projects detrimental to bird habitats.

I urge you to write your representatives in D.C. and let them know we are against slashing protections that safeguard or destroy Habitat needed for these animals.

Dave Woodson
OCAS Conservation Chairperson

Oklahoma City Audubon Society Welcomes New Members

J. Pat Carter, Edmond, OK
Kent Bynum, Oklahoma City, OK
Mickie Grimmett, Pauls Valley, OK
Nancy Cain, Oklahoma City, OK

REFRESHMENTS

Snacks: Jimmy Woodard and Larry Mays
Ice and Drinks: Sue Woodson

Recorders Report Summer 2018

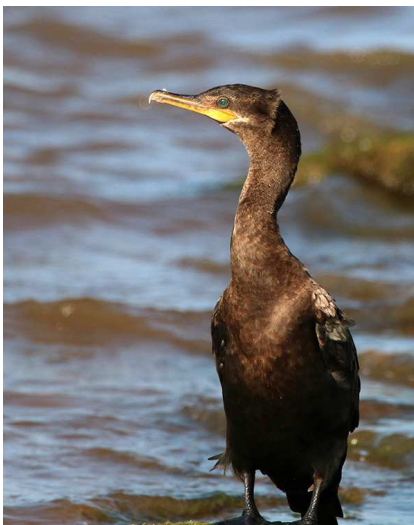
Changes

Although the summer was busy with nesting and juvenile birds learning survival skills, August brought important changes in bird movements and in eBird reporting protocols. eBird updated the taxonomic order of their bird list according to the latest scientific information including revelations from DNA testing. Check out the new order of bird listings with some moving up and others moving down. They have also adjusted the requirements for a bird list to be available for public information. In one central Oklahoma county 8 bird species were dropped from the primary list because the individual lists did not meet the requirements for public use.

Sometimes it is best to create more than one list for the birding areas visited during the day. And then Facebook got into the reporting act with two photograph postings of rare birds. Although Kingfisher County only has 37 species reported in eBird for the year, a photograph of a very rare bird was taken by construction employees near Dover. What other interesting species were missed in this county? And in another county a photograph of another rare bird was posted. What an interesting end to summer.

JUNE

On the 3rd in various locations in Pottawatomie County Joe Grzybowski documented Black Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Bewick's Wren and Summer Tanager. On the 5th Roy McGraw noticed Black-crowned Night-Heron at Rose Lake in Canadian County; and Brian Stufflebeam observed Black-necked Stilt at Lake Hefner – Prairie Dog Point. On the 6th Bert Frenz had Chimney Swift, Mississippi Kite, and Great-tailed Grackle at Stroud City Park in Lincoln County. On the 8th Steve Davis viewed Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Rose Lake in Canadian County. On the 10th Brian Marra counted Black-chinned Hummingbird at Mitch Park in Edmond, and Bill Diffin found Neotropic Cormorant at Prairie Dog Point.



On the 16th Ben Sandstrom spotted Great Egret, Broad-winged Hawk, and Summer Tanager at Prague Lake City Park in Lincoln County. On the 17th Emily Hjalmarson discovered Great Horned Owl near Macomb in

Pottawatomie County and **Barn Owl** along South Jenkins in Norman. On the 18 Bill Diffin confirmed **Long-billed Curlew** at Prairie Dog Point. On the 24th John Tharp identified a **Rufous-crowned Sparrow** in Norman. On the 25th Bill Diffin located Black-necked Stilt at Rose Lake.



JULY

On the 10th in Lincoln County Jimmy Woodard detected Great Crested Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Prague Lake City Park and Purple Martin, Baltimore Oriole, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting at Meeker Lake. On the 14th Zachary Hemans had Snowy Egret at Liberty Lake in Logan County. On the 20th Esther Key tallied Black Vulture at Elmore City Lake in Garvin County. On the 24th Joe Grzybowski reported Killdeer and Least Sandpiper on Hwy 81 north of Dover in Kingfisher County. On the 30th John Hurd recognized Willow Flycatcher at Lake Hefner. On the



31st Joe Grzybowski turned up Yellow-crowned Night-Heron on Hwy 9 near Riverwind in McClain County.

AUGUST

On the 1st Jimmy Woodard came across Wild Turkey, Great Horned Owl and Eastern Wood-pewee at Bell Cow Lake in Lincoln County. On the 2nd Ben Sandstrom got Least Sandpiper and Spotted Sandpiper at Purcell Lake in McClain County. On the 4th Steve Davis had Wild Turkey, Great Egret, and Western Kingbird at Lake R.C. Longmire and White-eyed Vireo, and Great-tailed Grackle at Paul's Valley Lake in Garvin County. On the 11th William Diffin verified Orchard Oriole east of Rose Lake. At Prague Lake City Park Eduardo Bergen recorded Snowy Egret on the 13th and on the 15th White-winged Dove, Greater Roadrunner and Bewick's Wren.

According to reports on Facebook on the 15th employees at Dolese Sand Pit in Dover noticed what appeared to be



a Juvenile **Brown Booby** sitting on some of their equipment and on the morning of the 16th it was found sitting on the ground. It allowed them to get pretty close but flew off when they attempted to catch it. They photographed it and reported it to a wildlife rehabber, Jessi-

ca Torres at Nature's Vein, but the bird had moved. On the 18th it was allegedly observed near Bristow.

On the 19th Zach Poland added Eurasian Collared-Dove and White-winged Dove in Kingfisher. Scott Loss identified Olive-sided Flycatcher at Boomer Lake in Payne County. On the 21st Caleb Frome – CC spotted Wood Duck, Snowy Egret, and Bell's Vireo at Wiley Post Memorial Lake in McClain County. On the 24th Kelly Baker photographed and posted on Facebook a **Roseate Spoonbill** with the American Pelicans at the canal inlet on the west side of Lake Hefner.

On the 25th Joe Grzybowski encountered Horned Lark at Goldsby Sod Farm in McClain County. On the 26th Zach Poland recorded a Mississippi Kite in Kingfisher; and a **Western Sandpiper** at John Marshall School Pond in Oklahoma City. As August ended fall migration was beginning. On the 31st Monica Ray discovered Mourning Warbler and Semipalmated Sandpiper along South Jenkins in Norman; John Hurd recognized Mourning Warbler, Yellow Warbler and Orchard Oriole along Stinchcomb West in Canadian County; and Hal Yocum and other regular birders at Mitch Park saw a female Yellow Warbler and a female American Redstart. What will be seen in September?

During the Summer of 2018 in the Central Oklahoma area **157** species were reported with **6** new species bringing the total for the year to **274**. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds by making reports at <http://ebird.org> (an online database of bird distribution and abundance from Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York.) Data for this report was accessed in eBird on August 30th, 2018 and at various times on Facebook and the OKBIRDS List. I can also be contacted by e-mail at emkok@earthlink.net. Esther M. Key, Editor.

Looking for good online reading?

Popular birding blogs:

TheAccidentalbirder.com

Since meeting her husband, she's become a birder. An accidental birder, at best. Birding has taken her out of her comfort zone and put her in places she never even thought of going to before like the Amazon, Galapagos Islands, the Andes and even undiscovered places in her own hometown.

Birdchick.com

Since 1997, she has successfully made it her goal to get paid to go birding. She travels the world as a field trip leader, birding consultant, humorous keynote speaker, bird field technician, bird bander and writer.

juliezickefoose.blogspot.com

Julie Zickefoose writes and paints from Indigo Hill, an 80-acre sanctuary in Appalachian Ohio. Her books include *Letters from Eden*, *The Bluebird Effect*, and *Baby Birds: An Artist Looks Into the Nest*.

StokesBirdingBlog.Blogspot.com

Donald and Lillian Stokes bring you great information about birds and birding, bird photography, and update you on what's happening with birds and keep you in touch with what's going on with the Stokes.

blog.lauraerickson.com

Laura Erickson has been a scientist, teacher, writer, wildlife rehabilitator, professional blogger, public speaker, photographer, American Robin and Whooping Crane Expert for the popular Journey North educational website, and Science Editor at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

blog.aba.org

Birders know well that the healthiest, most dynamic choruses contain many different voices. The blog of the American Birding Association is one of the best.

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