

## Officers

President	Bob Holbrook
Vice President	Grace Huffman
Secretary	Patti Muzny
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars
Parliament	Vacant
Programs	Warren Harden
Recorder	Esther M. Key
Conservation	Ann Sherman
Field Trips	Nancy Vicars Jimmy Woodard Hal Yocum Bob Holbrook
Newsletter	Patricia Velte
Publicity	Doug Eide
Historian	Vacant
Refreshments	Patti High
Webmaster	Patricia Velte
Public Relations	Terri Underhill

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

## *The Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes:*

Denell Hajjari, Norman  
Kimberlee Bishop, Edmond

## *Welcome back:*

Gaylynn Boice, Oklahoma City

# For the Birds!

**The speaker for our April 18 meeting will be none other than Dr. Floyd Murdoch.**

Dr. Floyd Murdoch is well known among old-timer birders. He was a charter member of the American Birding Association and one of the first Big Year guys setting a bar high enough that the idea of passing the 600 mark could be dreamed of. He was born in England during the “Battle of Britain,” spent his childhood in Australia and later moved to the US while in his teens. He caught the disease of Birding from a teacher in Australia and has been “off the deep end” ever since. His doctoral thesis was titled “For the Birds”—dealing with international laws and bird migrants.



In 1971, Murdoch, a graduate student at the University of Michigan, took a year off from his research and set out with a goal of seeing 600 species. What many people do not know is that it was Floyd Murdoch who set the new record that year with 669 species.

Dr. Murdoch lived for many years in Maryland where he was the President of the D.C. Audubon Society and led Society sponsored birding tours to Central America. He also founded and still curates a Nature Center near Hagerstown, MD. He currently calls Altus, OK home although he doesn’t actually spend too much of his time there. He has traveled to nearly 100 countries in his quest for new species of birds and has seen well over 6000 so far. He says he prefers to travel independently (not with tour groups) and connect with local birders who are much more knowledgeable about local birds than foreign tour group leaders.

In spite of all the traveling and high numbers of exotic birds and birding places he’s been to, he is still fascinated by local birds and as he travels around the US, he maintains state lists, county lists, trip lists, day lists ... **His topic will be a potpourri following what his life has been: For the Birds.**

Our meetings are held September through June on the third Monday of each month. 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

## **Two choices: Birding alone, Birding with a group. Which do you prefer?**

Both have their advantages and disadvantages. That first summer of 1960, my birding was with a group--a few other teenagers and our teacher, Mr. Axel. I have no idea how many, if any, of those other teens ever kept up with the hobby but I was hooked. It went from a hobby to a passion to an obsession to a "terminal disease". Yet in those years, as a teen in the '60's, to be out in nature with a pair of pawn-shop TASCO binoculars searching up in the trees for some little "dickey bird" was not exactly too cool so I quickly learned to bird alone. It just wasn't something to tell other teens about how I spent my weekends--until I was in college.

I wanted to take the semester course in Ornithology but just could not fit it in with my schedule however one day our Professor, Dr. Johnson, somehow found out about my interest. He invited me to join the course for its field trips which were held on Sundays. All of a sudden it was "cool" to be a birder. So group birding took over for awhile. Group birding provides from 2 to many extra eyes for spotting birds. Group birding gives one a chance to chat with other humans of like passions when birding seems a bit slow. Group birding helps to confirm a bird's identification especially when it's one of those "confusing fall warblers" or a "little peep" running along a lake's mucky edges. Group birding gives an opportunity for a little bit of bragging or one-upmanship. Group birding gives time for reminiscing of past adventures (tall tales). It's just always a bit more fun doing things with friends. But...



Bob Holbrook on the Essequibo River, Guyana

After college days I spent 4 years teaching junior high in New England and then received a call inviting me to head to the Amazon Basin of Peru. I jumped at the chance. And, found myself Birding alone, again. This was 1973. I had 2 books available: "A Guide to the Birds of South America" by Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee (the author's name alone should be a good clue as to the usefulness of the book--600 of the more than 3000 species were pictured and most of these just black and white drawings of heads), and the little book "The Birds of the Department of Lima, Peru" (a small book with black and white pencil drawn pictures) by Maria Koepcke. Maria was killed in a famous plane crash while working on what would have been a guide to the birds of Peru. Her daughter was the sole survivor of the crash, a friend of mine parachuted in to try to find survivors, and her husband returned to their native land of Germany and never followed through with the book. So now, advantages of birding alone (with no real good field guide): You learn to really see your subjects! Copious notes in little note pads along with constant reading brief details are a must AND you learn your birds! "45. Differs from 44 by pure white concealed dorsal patch. Perhaps distinguishable from 44 by slightly less marked olive shading on breast." Of course, you must also know what "44" looks like. In only 3 families of tropical birds there are more species than all of North America's species put together: hummingbirds, flycatchers, and ovenbirds. So "details, details, details!" Birding alone leaves you free to go where and when you choose. Birding alone forces you to know your birds. Birding alone requires you to concentrate on what you are doing non-stop. Birding alone forces you to be totally aware of ALL your surroundings at all times--for your own health and safety. And finally the quiet of birding alone enables you to find peace with your own thoughts and personal issues. So, either birding alone or birding with a group--hope you are enjoying your "disease"!

**By the way, if you've read this far down, I need some input.** Each month we have a meeting as you will notice in each of these bulletins--the third Monday night of the month. We invite some pretty awesome guest speakers, each are expert in their particular--bird-related--field. We currently have about 150 members in the OKC Audubon Society and keep adding new members every month. Here's my dilemma: Attendance is usually around 25-35 members who are quite regular--so regular we've become quite good friends. We range in interests from backyard birding to rare bird chasers and International specialists and that doesn't matter. But this means that there are about 100-125 or so members we hardly know at all. I'm wondering what it will take to get more of us to come to our meetings. What can we do better or differently? What kinds of guest speakers/topics might catch your interest? Lets dialogue a bit, send me your suggestions. My e-mail is incatarn@msn.com or you can text me at 405-496-1731. I hope to hear from y'all.

—Bob Holbrook, *alias Inca Tern*



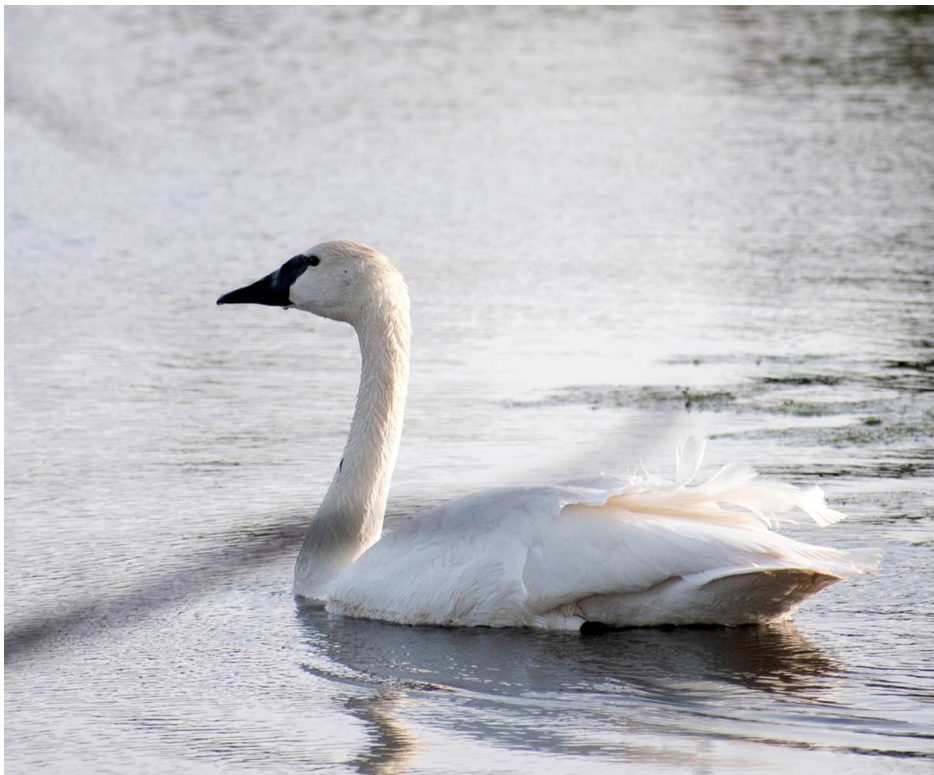
## Bird of the Month: Trumpeter Swan

By Grace Huffman

It's a bit late in the year to write about this bird as most have gone north, but I just saw one for the first time last week! This was one of my bucket list species (E.B. White's *The Trumpet of the Swan* was one of my favorite books growing up), which made it even more exciting to see.

Trumpeter Swans are very large white waterfowl, and one of 2 swans native to North America, along with Tundra Swans. Mute Swan individuals are often escaped or released from captivity, with very few naturalized populations in the US. Trumpeter Swans nest in various parts of Alaska, Canada and the northern half of the contiguous 48 states. They build large mounds of vegetation, which the female then shapes around her body to form a bowl to lay 4-6 eggs in. Once the babies hatch, they usually leave the nest in about 24 hours and can swim and feed themselves.

Their winter range is as sporadic as their summer range. Here in Oklahoma you can typically only find them in the winter, usually at places like Tallgrass Prairie or ponds around Bartlesville. Last February's cold snap brought them all the way to the OKC metro, but the winter weather prevented me from leaving my house for almost a week, and by the time I could get out they were long gone. The weather also proved to be a hindrance on a trip up to NE Oklahoma this January, where ponds they would often be sighted in were frozen over due to cold temps. I had given up on seeing one this year at all until one was sighted last week about half an hour north of OKC in Logan County. Sure enough, it was there! I was quite surprised that it let us take great photos of it before swimming away & across the pond. I was also surprised that one was this far south this late in the year. Wonder what led it here?



Trumpeter Swan ©Grace Huffman

Trumpeter Swans are currently a low concern species, and are a great conservation success story. They were driven to near extinction almost 100 years ago, but as of 2005 they number over 34,000 and are continuing to increase and expand their range. Still, threats to these gorgeous birds include human disturbance of nests and young, habitat loss, and lead poisoning to name a few. Hopefully next winter a few more will come south and you will be able to see one!

References: [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org)



# The Joys of Road Trips

By Patti Muzny

There are road trips and there are “road trips.” Through the eyes and ears of longtime birders and best friends, Nancy Vicars and Patti Muzny, a road trip could be a trip across town or across the state or to almost anywhere. We both keep a running list of necessities that go with us anytime we are motivated to grab our binoculars and dash out the door. For many years we’ve been doing Breeding Bird Surveys, Atlas Blocks and monitoring Bald Eagle Nests, but we really don’t need an excuse.



On April 5<sup>th</sup>, somewhere around 3:30 PM, Nancy called to ask if I wanted to do a short road trip to Wewoka to check out a couple of eagle nests. Nancy had been contacted by the Sutton Center to see if we would like to meet a new eagle survey volunteer and show her the ropes of “eagle peeping.” She had called our new friend, Trina, and she could meet us at 4:30 PM, and she also knew of a great Mexican restaurant in Wewoka that we might enjoy. Anyone who knows the Vicars/Muzny team knows we love to bird, but we also love to find new places to eat. That was the icing on this cake.

It was a beautiful evening and we spent several hours talking about birds and eagles and although the nests we found were inactive, we did finally spot a pair of adult Bald Eagles perched not far from the apparently abandoned nest. We hypothesize that the nest may have been predated or the eggs infertile, but there was no sign of any eaglets or nest-tending activity.

While we were parked beside the eagle’s pasture, we heard a familiar bit of bird chatter and looked up on the utility wire where saw and heard our first Scissortail Flycatcher. We headed into town to eat some of the best Mexican food I’ve had in a long time at El Cazador! Trina had been there before and she certainly did not lead us astray.

We packed a lot of fun into that road trip and still managed to make it home by around 10:00 PM.

So you might think I was likely done with this road trip stuff? Wednesday was another day and another opportunity to run off to Blaine County to begin surveying two of Nancy’s Atlas blocks. We packed up our lunch and necessities and left OKC at around 9:00 AM, and headed NW into a pretty stiff wind, but we had sunshine and that portion of Oklahoma was not on fire.

These two blocks were definitely not high on our list of favorites and we really had to struggle to find the few species we were able to locate. There was heavy drilling activity everywhere and it was a bit too early for most of the migrants. In 18 square miles and on two separate areas, we heard only one Cardinal and a couple of Blue Jays, one Red-bellied and one Downy Woodpecker, although there were areas with trees that looked as if they should host birds. We only found one Eurasian Collared Dove in someone’s yard, but no Mourning Doves. We got a good look at a Horned Lark that had chosen a meadow muffin as its throne. Go figure! We noted the Barn Swallows had returned, as had the Swainson’s Hawks. We found several American Kestrels, but not until after noon. I guess they sleep in.

A couple of small weed patches in a ditch had attracted a little flock of Vesper Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows, a few Savannah Sparrows and a couple of Harris’s Sparrows.

There was a memorable highlight! In a flock of about 200 Red-winged Blackbirds, a golden yellow bright spot popped up! One lone Yellow-headed Blackbird stood out like, “a sore thumb,” against the bright green wheat field!

We also spotted a Bald Eagle nest at the edge of our territory, although the nest appeared to be unused and not in the best of shape. And, we never did find any eagles.

While out wandering throughout the state with our primary objective being birding, we always experience other gifts from Nature and this trip provided another heartwarming moment in a rather bleak area. We were driving slowly down a county road when we spotted a cow standing alone close to the road. She had just given birth, and we spotted a tiny, brown, wobbly-legged calf that was still wet and the cow was in the process of delivering the afterbirth! Those first unsteady steps taken by that calf have become another awesome memory in our road trip history.

All in all, two road trips in two days suited us just fine and although our Blaine County adventure lacked activity and scenic value, we enjoyed being out and enjoyed what we did manage to find. You’d be surprised at how much fun we can have with a pair of binoculars, a tank of gas and sense of humor! Happy birding!

# Birding and Gardening

by Ann Sherman

They go together, don't they? The more time I spend in the garden the more time I have to observe the birds I have attracted. Here's a little refresher if you need it.

Have less lawn. Plant more native plants instead. Give yourself a reality check. No matter what I do I am not going to be a home for waterfowl or grassland birds. They aren't coming. Although I did have a couple Mallards check out my backyard for nesting purposes they didn't stay long after meeting Ziggy the 11 pound terrier I share my home with. The birds who will come are the ones you need to think about.

Mow less. Leave those dead leaves alone. Never take a tree out lower than that needed for safety. Tree Snags can be a perch for raptors, a food source for insects who in turn feed the masses, lichen and fungi provide food and shelter. Woodpeckers will love you, as will the many other birds who depend on their excavations for their nests. They need dead trees. I know it's hard in our tidy society to let some of these suggestions occur. Try being a little lazier and post a sign that your messy appearing yard is a wildlife sanctuary. That worked for me until someone stole my sign.

Brush piles are an enormous attraction for wildlife. I'm thinking of planting taller plants around mine. It is untidy. But the birds and insects who live there surely think I am a goddess.

Provide water 12 months of the year. This I struggle with. My birdbath is 8 feet off the ground...feral cats. I have to work out how to keep the birds watered,



the cats from reaching the birds, and the way to heat the water in the winter without extension cords. Still thinking this over.

I have some suggestions for native plants and generally good fun.

**Bustani Plant Farms in Stillwater.** They open for the season April 19th. Tuesday thru Saturday.  
<https://www.bustaniplantfarm.com>

They are a mom and pop operation that is only open for two months in the spring and a couple weeks in the fall. Other than that they are growing plants. They have spent years finding plants that grow well in our climate. Perennials, tropicals for beds and containers, some annuals, vines, Oklahoma natives, and a few species of shrubs. They have wonderful gardens on the grounds and I have been going on opening day for years. You will not regret making the trip. Go by the Botanical Gardens at OSU while there and they have a cool art museum in the old PO in town.

**Lia's Garden at Commonwealth.**

1016 NW 32nd St. OKC  
<https://eliawoods.com>

This is a treat right in the middle of OKC. The greenhouses are packed with native perennials, herbs and veggie seedlings. Just driving down the street is a thrill. You see the greenhouses...plus the entire neighborhood has been planted by Lia. This time of year bulbs are blooming all up and down the street. On the next street is the flower garden Lia grows for events and bouquets and whatever. It will be glorious soon. If you run into Steph ask to see her greenhouse. She has Cacti and succulents for sale....and some other items. The natives are friendly and involved in the gardens.

**Bob Scotts Nursery.** 10116 W. Wilshire Blvd. OKC.  
<http://www.bobscottsnursery.com>

Another mom and pop operation. They started in the 70s and now have five greenhouses. They specialize in Lilies, Hydrangeas, Helleborus, and Peonies. Lots of other plants too. The greenhouses are marked Light and Shade. They are down the road from the house so you stroll on down thru the growing fields and put your purchases outside the greenhouses. One of the Scotts will bring down the tractor and haul your goods to your car.

Have fun. That's the most important thing about birding and gardening. It's spring!! Hallelujah!!

# Recorder's Report

## March 2022

As the redbuds begin to blossom and the bees and butterflies awaken, Dark-eyed Juncos, ducks, gulls and other wintering birds begin leaving, while summer nesters are arriving and others are passing through to their more northerly nesting grounds. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and Barn Swallows were reported in 7 of the 12 central Oklahoma Counties. All of the other swallow species except one have arrived. A few shorebirds and warblers are beginning to show up. And so as the redbuds began to blossom, birding excitement grows.

On February 27<sup>th</sup> in Grady County along the H E Bailey Turnpike near Amber Aaron Short spotted a **Short-eared Owl** sitting on top of a small tree near a pond SW of the toll booth while later he came across a **Barn Owl** at the Cimarron Bridge in Logan County. On March 1<sup>st</sup> Michelle Spacek found Pileated Woodpecker near Pink in Pottawatomie County; and Megan Migues tallied Sharp-shinned Hawk at Stroud in Lincoln County. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Jerry Vanbebber detected Belted Kingfisher and Hairy Woodpecker at Bell Cow Lake in Lincoln County; and Jim Bradford heard a group of about 100 Sandhill Cranes flying over OK-51 between Okeene and Hennessey in Kingfisher County.



Neotropic Cormorant ©Scott Loss

On the 6<sup>th</sup> Trina Arnold added Downy Woodpecker, American Kestrel and White-crowned Sparrow at Okemah in Seminole County. On the 11<sup>th</sup> Scott Loss photographed **Neotropic Cormorant** at Boomer Lake Park. On the 12<sup>th</sup> in Garvin County Grace Huffman recognized American Pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur near Maysville and Fish Crow and

Eastern Phoebe at Elmore City; in McClain County at Goldsby Sod Farm Brian Marra counted **Yellow-headed Blackbird**; at Shawnee in Pottawatomie County Michelle Spacek got Bald Eagle; and in Payne County at Lake Carl Blackwell Alex Harman recorded **Barn Swallow**. On the 13<sup>th</sup> Jacob and Katie Crissup located Eastern Bluebird, Redhead and Wilson's Snipe at Purcell Lake in McClain County; and Michael Kane viewed Barn Swallow at OKC Community College.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> Joe Grzybowski documented **Sprague's Pipit** at Ten Mile Flats in Norman. On the 15<sup>th</sup> Azir Serinus identi-

fied Red-headed Woodpecker at Paul's Valley. On the 17<sup>th</sup> Zach DuFran saw Red-tailed Hawk at Wewoka in Seminole County; and Scott Loss observed **Purple Martin** at Boomer Lake Park. On the 19<sup>th</sup> Amy Brewer reported Wild Turkey near Rush Springs in Grady County; Gayle Bachert confirmed Great Egret at Calumet in Canadian County; and Landon Neumann verified **Black-and-white Warbler** at Lake Carl Blackwell. On the 20<sup>th</sup> Steve Stone turned Northern Shoveler and Blue-



Tree Swallow

winged Teal south of Guthrie in Logan County; Geoff Butcher noticed **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** at Martin Park Nature Center in OKC; Brian Marra discovered **Tree Swallow**

and Black-and-white Warbler at Arcadia Lake; and Cody Delano encountered Purple Martin in Norman.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> Sharon Henthorn found **Cliff Swallow** at Northeast Zoo Lake Park. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> Jana Singletary came across Red-headed Woodpecker and Cedar Waxwing at FireLake Golf Course at Shawnee in Pottawatomie County. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> Grace Huffman detected Purple Martin at Martin Park Nature Center. On the 24<sup>th</sup> Jana Singletary added Horned Lark at Stroud Golf Course in Lincoln County; Larry Mays noted Purple Martin in Newcastle; Brian Marra photographed Neotropic Cormorant at Lake Hefner – Prairie Dog Point; and at Lake Thunderbird Someone recognized Tree Swallow and Barn Swallow while Lindell Dillon tallied Cliff Swallow.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> Brian Marra spotted Winter Wren and **Franklin's Gull** at Stinchcomb WR West; Curtis Stewart identified Yellow-headed Blackbird, Greater Yellowlegs, and Swamp Sparrow at Dover Marsh in Kingfisher County; Grace Huffman and Brian Marra heard **Sora Rail** and detected **Virginia Rail** at Lake Overholser – Coffey Dam; while in Logan County Someone located **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** in Guthrie and Aaron Short observed **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** at Summit View Cemetery.

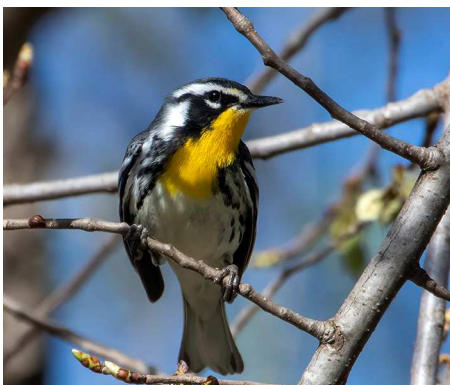
On the 26<sup>th</sup> Matt Jung viewed a small flock of Purple Martins in Warr Acres; Steve Davis, Larry Mays and



Jimmy Woodard verified Barn Swallow and Fish Crow in Newcastle and **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at the River-wind wetland in McClain County; Brian Marra confirmed **Lark Sparrow** at Crystal Lake in OKC; Someone recorded **American Golden-Plover** and **Baird's Sandpiper** at Lake Thunderbird; while in Payne County Mike Yough and Landon Neumann discovered **Louisiana Waterthrush** at Ghost Hollow and **Pectoral Sandpiper** and Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Cushing WTP. Meanwhile, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were counted by Kalen Melton at Lake Hefner and Steve Davis along South Jenkins Ave in Norman. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher were noticed by Michael Kane in Stillwater and Cody Delano at Wanette in Pottawatomie County. Cliff Swallow were reported by Scott Loss at Boomer Lake Park and Curtis Stewart at Turkey Creek off Hwy 51 in Kingfisher County.



Louisiana Waterthrush



Yellow-throated Warbler

On the 27<sup>th</sup> Matt Jung saw Great Egrets at Rose Lake in Canadian County; at Lake Thunderbird Carter Stephens encountered Louisiana Waterthrush, and Joe Grzybowski recognized **Yellow-throated Warbler**; while in Kingfisher

County Grace Huffman and Brian Marra spotted American Golden-Plover along Hwy 33, and Franklin's Gull, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, **Lesser Yellowlegs** and Vesper Sparrow at Lake Elmer. Also Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were counted by Grace and Brian on County Line Road between Canadian and Kingfisher Counties; by David Peterson in Norman; and Stephan Ables near Elmore City. Barn Swallows were had by Phillip Ables near Elmore City, Braden Farris at Cashion in Logan County, and Megan Migues at Stroud in Lincoln County.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> Jason Shaw found **Swainson's Hawk** at the USAO Habitat Area in Grady County; Nancy Reed observed **Common Nighthawk** near Norman; Braden Farris verified

**Osprey** at Lake Hefner – Prairie Dog Point; Dick Gunn tallied Marsh Wren along South Jenkins; and Steve Stone noted Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Bluff Creek Trails in OKC. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were located by Tim O'Connell in Stillwater and Grace Huffman at Stinchcomb WR West. On the 30<sup>th</sup> Jake Gerlt identified **Solitary Sandpiper** in Mustang; Grace Huffman had **Snowy Egret** at Lake Hefner – Prairie Dog Point; Landon Neumann recorded Tree Swallow at Boomer Lake Park; Jake Gerlt got Purple Martin in Mustang; while **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** arrived at Olen and Teresa Thomas' feeder in Stillwater. On the 31<sup>st</sup> Hal Yocum reported Ruby-throated Hummingbird at his feeder in Edmond.

In the Central Oklahoma area during March **162** species were reported with **31** new species which brings the year's total at **180**. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds. Information is accessed at: [ebird](https://ebird.org). 2022 eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: <https://ebird.org/region/US-OK?yr=all>. (Accessed March 30 & 31, 2022); and occasionally from Facebook, and the OKBIRDS List. I can be contacted at [emkok@earthlink.net](mailto:emkok@earthlink.net). Esther M. Key, Editor.



## Flock of Wilson's Snipes

On Saturday, March 26, 2022, Warren Harden, his son Wade, and three others were fishing on a private lake northwest of Coalgate when a flock of over 40 Wilson's Snipes flew out of a large patch of dead cattails and into another patch along the shore. All five saw snipes flying among patches of dead cattails on both sides of the lake all morning making it impossible to estimate a total number of birds. Flocks, or wisps, of snipes are apparently rare in Oklahoma.

# Minutes of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society Meeting

March 21, 2022

By Patti Muzny, Secretary

The meeting was opened at 7:00 PM at the Will Rogers Garden Center by President, Bob Holbrook. Treasurer Nancy Vicars presented a treasurer's report and distributed copies. Cash on hand as of March 21, 2022, was \$8,717.47. The minutes of the February 21, 2022, meeting were approved as published in the March newsletter.

The next meeting will be held at the Will Rogers Garden Center on Monday, April 18, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

New Members and visitors were introduced.

Patti High asked for members to volunteer to bring refreshments for upcoming meetings.

President Holbrook noted that the club membership is around 150 members, although only from 25 to 40 actually attend. He asked for suggestions as to how to encourage more people to attend. Terri Underhill suggested that our website provide a link for suggestions from others to hopefully increase attendance. She will discuss this idea with Pat Velte, our webmaster and newsletter editor.

Sharon Henthorn shared her story about totaling her car in a concrete drainage ditch after a recent evening field trip to Lake Draper watch for Woodcocks. Jimmy Woodard reported finding four Woodcocks displaying about 4 weeks ago. He was able to closely observe their courtship display, or "dance."

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Terri Underhill was asked to lead a bird hike at Mitch Park in Edmond. She has also been asked about finding someone to lead bird hikes in some of the Edmond parks in the next few months. Someone from Edmond will contact OKCAS regarding the possibility of leading birding walks. Interested members may contact Terri for more information.

Jimmy Woodard reported that the OOS Spring meeting will be held at Martin Nature Park on April 9, 2022. The OOS needs officers and ideas as to how to increase interest and membership.

Jimmy and Nadine have scheduled a trip to Lake Erie and points north and east from May 15. If any member would like to caravan separately to this area and join them for that part of their trip, please let Jimmy or Nadine know.

The Payne County Audubon Society is sponsoring a Big Day Event on April 25, 2022. There is a \$25 entry fee and the target bird this year is the Loggerhead Shrike. Fee includes a tee shirt.

Terri Underhill also reports two owlets in her "owl barrel." The camera footage can be viewed at okiebirdnerd on YouTube.

On April 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM, members of OKCAS are invited to tour Molly Spencer Farms for a birding walk around the property. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the farm will be open to the public at 8:00 AM. Members may attend and assist visitors with improving their birding skills. There will also be another opportunity to return on April 19<sup>th</sup>. There is a pair of Wood Ducks residing at Molly Spencer.

The April program will feature Floyd Murdock, one of the first "Big Year" record holders with over 6,500 species.

Nancy Vicars introduced Stephanie Jordan, the pollinator outreach coordinator for the Nature Conservancy, who presented another outstanding and entertaining program about attracting pollinators, including bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patti Muzny  
Secretary

## Upcoming Field Trips

**Tuesday, April 19, 2022** to Molly Spencer Farm, Yukon, OK  
7:30AM - 9:30AM (OCAS members only)

Molly Spencer Farm, 1001 Garth Brooks Blvd. (NE corner of Garth Brooks and Vandament St. in Yukon). Parking is located at the school parking lot on the north side.

The farm is not open to the general public outside of regularly-scheduled events hosted at the farm.

For more info contact: Nancy Vicars,  
nancy.vicars@sbcglobal.net



## Field Trip Report: Fort Cobb Lake

On Saturday, March 5, nine fearless adventurers braved life and limb to follow me on a backroads field trip to Ft Cobb Lake.

The morning began around 7:00 with clouds scudding across the sky driven by a brisk southerly wind. I think the temperature at start time was around 50 degrees, and rose to nearly 80 by days end, so fortunately we weren't in serious danger of frostbite.

We left Newcastle (where I deviously planned the trip start within a short drive of my house), and drove through Tuttle, America, and on through the backroads past Gracemont and on to the lake. We weren't seeing many roadside birds, but managed to tick a couple Red-tailed Hawks, a Northern Harrier, and a large flock of possibly 200 cowbirds with a few Brewer's Blackbirds thrown in for seasoning.

Winds made most birds stay well under cover, so we had to work a bit to find things, but over the course of the day we managed to get close to 50 species.

Highlights included huge flocks of Snow/Ross's geese (guesses ranged from 5,000 to 10,000) these white geese are aptly named as the flocks coming in and landing on the water looked like a snow storm (seriously).

Other fun birds to find were a Prairie Falcon, a flock of about 40 Greater White-fronted Geese, a goodly selection of ducks, and a sizeable flock of Cackling Geese, though we missed the big numbers of cacklings that had been seen only a couple of weeks earlier.

We had a couple flocks of migrating Sandhill Cranes which were riding those winds, and probably ended their day at Salt Plains NWR or Quivera NWR.

One Bald Eagle on nest found by sharp-eyed Steve Davis topped our day.

I think we managed to get everyone home without serious losses.

—Larry Mays (*comfortably returned to home in Newcastle*)

## Field Trip Report: Mollie Spencer Farm

**Tuesday, April 5, 2022**

We were greeted with a dense fog on arrival at the farm that didn't lift during our walk.

Carolina Wren, Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, Mallards, Canada Geese, Wood Duck, Great Egret, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwings, House Finch, Red-shouldered Hawk, Franklin Gulls, Northern Cardinal, American Crows and a pair of Fish Crows were either seen or heard. The only migrant we saw was a Northern Parula.

**Saturday, April 9, 2022**

A beautiful clear, calm morning was such an improvement over Tuesday morning's weather.

The birds, however, were few and far between. Mallards, Canada Geese, Franklin's Gulls, Downy Woodpecker, Carolina Wren and a pair of Fish Crows.

The best birds of the day were Brown Thrasher, Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

After the walk was over and all the visitors had left, Terri Underhill and I saw a beautiful Swainson's Hawk flyover on the way to our cars!

Twenty visitors attended the outing and I was so disappointed with the scarcity of birds to share with them.

— Nancy Vicars

## Shutter Slam from ODWC

With its amazingly diverse wildlife community, sweeping landscapes, and abundant recreational opportunities, Outdoor Oklahoma is a photographer's paradise! To better bring our state's rich photo ops – and the photographers behind the shot – into focus, the Wildlife Department has created a Shutter Slam challenge.

To learn more about the four Slam categories go to: <https://www.wildlifedepartment.com/wildlife-diversity/shutter-slam-challenge>

# Bird Watcher's Digest

## Returns

*(excerpt) From WTAP, Mid-Ohio Valley*

Bird Watcher's Digest was founded by Bill and Elsa Thompson in 1978 in Marietta. This past December, Wendy Clark, President and former Publisher of the magazine told WTAP that they would be publishing their last issue due to a loss in advertising revenue and having to issue refunds to birding tours due to the pandemic.

"We're so proud of that legacy," Clark said back in December. " [ It's] sad that we can't continue it now but hopefully it will continue on in some form."

Julie Zickefoose a long-time editor of Bird Watcher's Digest said some dedicated birders have swooped in to bring the publication back to life. Rich Luhr, Publisher of Airstream Life, based in Tucson Arizona, and Michael Sacopulos, an attorney based in Indiana will be the new publishers.

"The magazine will be substantially the same with the staff and the content," Zickefoose said. "It will keep its soul which is very important to us. It will be cohesive. This is not a corporate takeover. This is two people coming in and saying we're going to start publishing this magazine again and we are just thrilled to pieces about it."

Sacopulos said he's been reading Bird Watcher's Digest since he was a kid. And while he said he loves the publication, they have decided to make some changes they think will only enhance what makes the magazine so special.

"In a hobby that is incredibly visual, we thought that it would be better to have the images larger," Socapulus said. "So, we are going for a more traditional size publication to really show off the photography and the artwork."

And much of that artwork is from Zickefoose-who is known internationally for her bird paintings.

Zickefoose and Sacopulos said the first issue of the revamped Bird Watcher's Digest will be released in June.



## Great Horned Owls grow up

by Terri Underhill

My great horned owls, Jack and Carol's two owlets, are growing fast. I named the owlets Uki (to pay homage to Ukraine) and Bubo (Latin for owl and from Clash of the Titans). Bubo hatched March 9<sup>th</sup> and is a tad bigger. April 13<sup>th</sup> he/she will be 5 weeks old . Uki hatched on March 11th. They are exercising their wings and, this week, they will branch out. Carol brings food to a branch to coax them out of the nest. Jack calls to Carol when he has prey he has caught. Carol always roosts nearby. At about 9-10 weeks the owlets take the first flight out of the nest to the ground. But, in the past, my owlets have always fallen from the tree much earlier. Once they leave the nest they will beg for food until September or October being fed by the parents. I do not know the sex of the owlets but assume Mother Nature give them one of each. Please enjoy watching my owlets that I am so honored to have.

You can watch 24/7 live video at [www.okiebirdcam.com](http://www.okiebirdcam.com) . I also have videos on YouTube at <https://youtube.com/user/okiebirdnerd>

## REFRESHMENTS

The following folks will be providing refreshments for the Mon, April 18 OCAS meeting:

SNACKS: Franny Pasternik, Jimmy Woodard, Nancy Vicars, and Susan Schmidt

ICE/DRINKS: Randy & Sharon Henthorn