

TALL TALES

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

Tall Bird Tales will again highlight our annual December meeting on December 15, accompanied by holiday culinary delights and camaraderie.

Bring yourselves and your anecdotes and yarns to regale fellow members with your wonderful, beautiful, harrowing or death defying birding experiences.

Great birds have shown up in Oklahoma some truly great birders have had truly great times with those and many other birds. Come out for the fun and friendship and sharing. A good time will be had by all. We gather in the round to relate a birding story or other personal event of interest and/or humor for the entire group. So, get your story straight, true or otherwise, and regale us on **Monday night, December 15.**

Refreshments: Everyone is encouraged to bring something to share.

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



© David Drangsland

The Bearded Reedling is vying for both the "cutest bird" and "angriest" bird awards

President's Perspective

I am preparing for the upcoming Christmas Bird Count but am missing a lot of birds that my Merlin app identifies. I decided to improve my sound ID skills by buying some OTC hearing aids. I purchased and received them this week and promptly went birding at Zoo Lake, OKC. I was gratified to hear and identify Fox Sparrows and Harris' Sparrows as well as White-throated Sparrows. I am hopeful my identification skills will continue to improve.

— Sharon Henthorn



2025 Christmas Bird Count Schedule

This year's Christmas Bird count (CBC) window runs from December 14 to January 5. As your OKC Audubon Society compiler I've chosen Sunday, December 14 as our count day.

As with last year, I have reserved a room at Johnnie's on Britton Road (OKC) from 5-7 pm for our compilation dinner.

Jimmy Woodard
5918 E 4th Terrace
Tulsa, OK 74112

If you are interested in participating, please contact Jimmy by phone and he will assign you to an area: 405-365-5685.



IMPORTANT NOTE:

Mark your calendars — The January 2026 meeting
will be held on

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026

Brand-new tinamou found in Brazil

© The New York Times

The Slaty-masked Tinamou, recently discovered in the remote Serra do Divisor mountains of western Brazil, is believed to be the first new small forest tinamou species identified in 75 years. Photo Credit...Luis Morais

Rotund, ground-dwelling and unafraid of humans to its own peril, the famed dodo bird became an icon of extinction when it disappeared from the island of Mauritius, and from Earth, in the 17th century, soon after Dutch settlers first encountered the bird.

Now Brazilian ornithologists say that they have discovered an analog of the Dodo in the remote Amazon: the slaty-masked tinamou, a chickenlike bird that exhibits a total lack of fear toward people. The researchers are looking to the Dodo's demise to prevent the tinamou from suffering a similar fate.

The comparison to the dodo was "scientifically accurate," said Luis Morais, a doctoral candidate in zoology at the Museu Nacional of Rio de Janeiro and the lead author on the paper announcing the finding, which was published on Tuesday in the journal *Zootaxa*. "The bird's behavior mirrors historical accounts of the extinct Dodo, and its extinction risk is equally real."

Most unusual is its oblivious demeanor. Mr. Morais's team spent three years trying to lay eyes on the bird, after detecting it by ear for the first time in October 2021 in Acre, Brazil. But once it revealed itself, it appeared remarkably tame, wandering calmly through the forest understory and showing no aversion to human presence. The researchers were stunned when individual birds walked right up to them on several occasions.

Its scientific name, *Tinamus resonans*, refers to the striking echo and disorienting acoustics of its song. The bird is believed to be the first new small forest tinamou species discovered in 75 years.

"Someone finding a brand-new tinamou in the field is simply absurdly bananas," Mr. Calderón-Franco said. "The fact that this bird has been hiding in a little remote corner of Brazil forever is mind-blowing."



The five great forests that keep North America's birds alive

Billions of migratory birds rely on Central America's Five Great Forests as winter refuges and stopover points. These forests host up to half the global populations of several declining species, making them irreplaceable. But rapid deforestation threatens their survival.

Every spring, the familiar songs of Wood Thrushes and warblers drift back into parks and neighborhoods across eastern North America. Few people realize that these birds spend most of their lives much farther south, relying on the lush and often remote forests of Central America to survive the rest of the year.

A recent study from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (Cornell Lab), published in *Biological Conservation*, shows that the Five Great Forests of Central America -- stretching from southern Mexico to northern Colombia -- are essential for many migratory bird species that connect the two continents.

Using detailed information on weekly bird distribution, made possible by millions of sightings submitted to the Cornell Lab's global eBird platform, researchers discovered that these forests collectively provide habitat for between one-tenth and nearly one-half of the global populations of 40 migratory species. Many of these birds are among the fastest declining in North America.

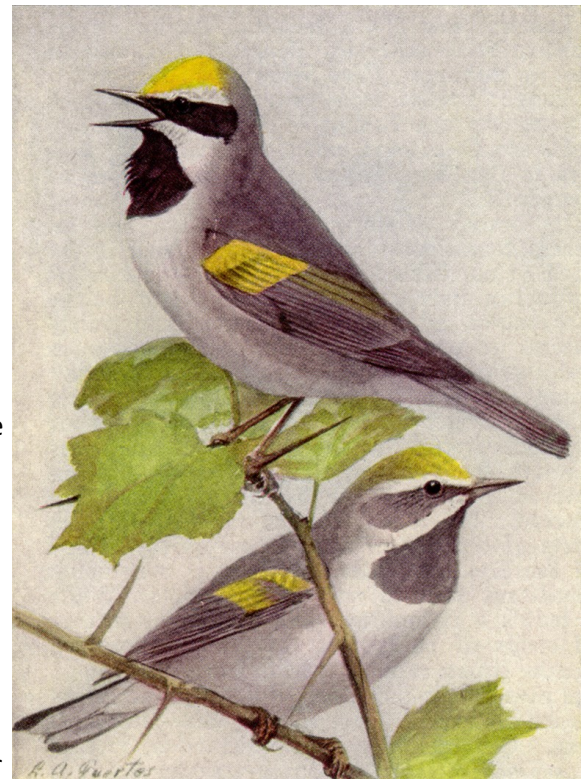
"What happens in Central America directly affects the birds we love in the United States and Canada," said Anna Lello-Smith, lead author and conservation scientist at WCS. "These forests aren't just tropical wilderness -- they're at the heart of migration, sustaining many of our birds for more than half the year. They provide the food and shelter that allow Wood Thrushes, Magnolia Warblers, and so many others to turn north to fill our spring with song and color."

Among the study's most notable results:

- More than one-third of the world's Kentucky Warblers and nearly one-quarter of all Wood Thrushes and Golden-winged Warblers spend the winter in these forests.
- Over 40 percent of the global Cerulean Warbler population, a species that has declined by more than 70 percent since 1970, passes through these forests during spring migration.
- The Selva Maya (spanning Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala) and the Moskitia (in Honduras and Nicaragua) are the most important forest regions for these species -- yet they are losing habitat rapidly, with a quarter of their area cleared in just 15 years, largely due to illegal cattle ranching.

Together, the Selva Maya, Moskitia, Indio Maíz-Tortuguero, La Amistad, and Darién form a continuous ecological corridor roughly the size of Virginia. This region shelters not only migratory songbirds but also jaguars, tapirs, and scarlet macaws. For birds migrating thousands of miles each year, these forests serve as essential resting and wintering grounds.

In many ways, the Five Great Forests serve as tropical counterparts to North America's eastern forests. They shelter the same suite of forest-loving birds, including Scarlet Tanagers, Kentucky Warblers, Golden-winged Warblers, and Broad-winged Hawks, during the months when these species are far from their breeding territories. Safeguarding these wintering and stopover habitats is essential for ensuring that these birds continue to return north each spring.



Painting of male and female Golden-winged Warbler By Louis Agassiz Fuertes

Minutes of the OKC Audubon Society Meeting November 17, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Sharon Henthorn.

Attendance: 42, including one new member.

Treasurer's Report: Nancy Vicars presented the report, which was approved as read. Cash on hand: \$9,807.31.

October minutes were read and approved. Terri Underhill and Sharon Henthorn have agreed to act as the Nominating Committee for the 2026 elections.

Jimmy Woodard is running the OKC Christmas Bird Count this year on Sunday, December 14. There will be a post-survey dinner at Johnnie's at Britton and May.

Chad Ellis is organizing a birding trip to Dominican Republic in July 2026. Contact him for details.

The speaker was Nancy Vicars who gave a great presentation on a trip to Hudson Bay in Canada, including original photo slides.

Our next meeting will be the holiday party on December 15, 2025. Everyone is encouraged to bring a refreshment to share, as well as a birding tale (how true/exaggerated it is is up to you!)

-Cole Penning, Secretary

The queen returns!



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

At an approximate age of 75, Wisdom the albatross returned this week to Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge for nesting season.

Like other Laysan albatross, or mōlī in Hawaiian, Wisdom returns to the same nesting site each year to reunite with her mate, and if able, lay one egg. Last year, the world's oldest known wild bird successfully laid an egg for the first time in four years.

Wisdom's arrival to the refuge in the central Pacific Ocean is slightly earlier than prior years. Her new mate from last year has not been seen yet, according to staff.

Biologists first identified and banded Wisdom in 1956 after she laid an egg, and the large seabirds aren't known to breed before age 5.

It is estimated that Wisdom has produced 50-60 eggs and as many as 30 chicks that fledged in her lifetime.

Each year, millions of seabirds return to Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge on the northwestern edge of the Hawaiian Archipelago to nest and raise their young. Wisdom, specifically, has been doing this since the Eisenhower administration.

USFWS photos: Jon Plissner