

## Officers

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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:*

Trina Arnold, OKC  
Jesse Pline, Noble, OK  
Susan Jaragin, Morrestown, NJ

# The Wonderful World of Bats

The speaker for our Monday, **February 20**, meeting will be Dr. Jason Shaw of USAO in Chickasha with a program entitled **"The wonderful world of bats, myths and reality--Bat conservation efforts in the state of Oklahoma."**

Oklahoma has a wide variety of bat species due to our vast ecosystem diversity. Twenty-six bat species call Oklahoma home with four listed as federally endangered. All the species of bats in Oklahoma are insectivores and therefore provide a valuable resource for insect eradication. There are many conservation concerns to our bat community including habitat loss, wind power production, cave issues, White-nose syndrome. Many of these issues have led to an endangerment recently to certain species in Oklahoma including one being recently listed as federally endangered and another one that is in the review stages for listing as federally endangered.



Jason Shaw is an Associate Professor of Biology and Director of the USAO habitat area and outdoor lab at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha. Dr. Shaw has degrees in zoology, physiology from Southern Utah University and the University of Wyoming and a PhD in Biological Education from University of Colorado. Known widely as expert on bats, his favorite subject, he is an author, lecturer, researcher, birder and at one time a forest firefighter. In Oklahoma his research has focused on bat ecology with an emphasis on cave ecology where he is trying to understand the micro climate needs of Oklahoma's hibernating bats. He helps oversee cave surveys for White-nose syndrome throughout the western half of Oklahoma and is involved in many Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation research projects. His presentation on bats was made possible through his friend and former teaching colleague at USAO Dr. Mike Mather, a member of our OKC Audubon Society.

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

February--the best time to sit in a nice big lounge chair with a cup of hot chocolate or nice relaxing herbal tea and watch all the birds at the feeders outside. Birds had been a bit scarce at our feeders till the end of January, when that snow and extra cold hit. Now they're eating us out of house and home!

First to come in were a couple Red-breasted Nuthatches followed by two pairs of Purple Finches. After that word got out--FOOD IS HERE!! Now we can enjoy huge flocks of Goldfinches, dozens of Cardinals, Juncos, Doves, Chickadees, Titmice, House Finches, and more.

But the best thing about February is, of course, the 14th--Valentine's Day. With that my mind tends to wander over to the Lovebirds--9 wild species actually, in the genus *Agapornis*--those cute little members of the parrot family. There are numerous mutated cage varieties as well.

Lovebirds all originate in Africa along with one species from Madagascar. The reason for their name is from the strong bond they make with a mate. Their life



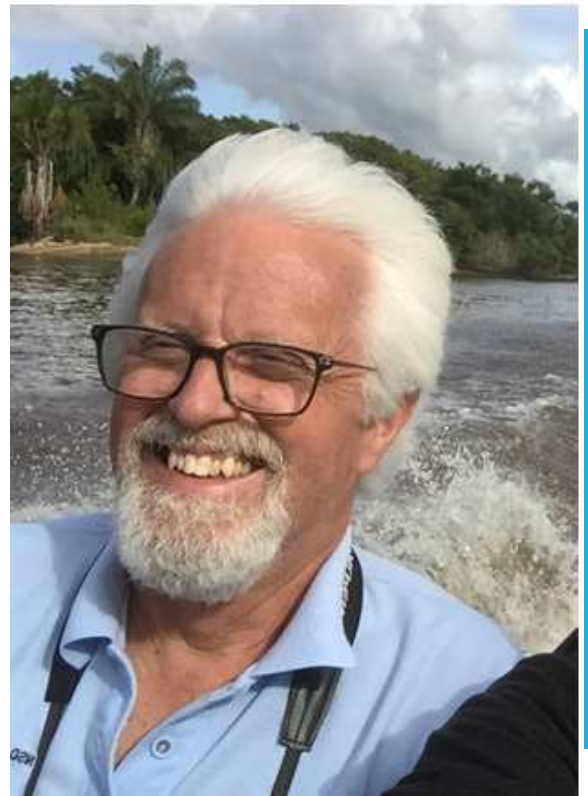
Pair of Fischer's Lovebirds

expectancy is from 20-30 years! I've been able to see two of the species so far; one in Namibia--the most commonly found in the pet industry, the Rosy-faced Lovebird, and one in Kenya, Fischer's Lovebird. Although they are fairly easy to keep, they do require certain specific care, otherwise they get quite stressed and begin to pluck their feathers, screech all the time, or become reclusive, and develop a nasty biting habit.

Perhaps therein lies a message for human "Lovebirds." Most humans can be fairly easy to get along with--spouses included. But a partner does have some specific requirements for good care. Those requirements often get neglected, especially by us birders, if our partner does not happen to be a birder. I know a number of my birding friends who are divorced (and I'll include myself) due at least in part to our birding habits, passion, and obsession. I frequently have to ask myself, "Is my partner stressed? And, Is it due to my behavior?" Very fortunate is the birder who is married to a birder, there is a natural understanding. Granted, even birder spouses have certain requirements in the relationship but, for the most part, they are simpler and mutual and therefore can be dealt with fairly easily.

I hope y'all took care to fulfill your spouse's perceived requirements this past Valentine's Day and every day. Even though for most of us birding is an obsession, it cannot take the place of a partner.

Bob Holbrook, Pres.



Bob Holbrook on the Essequibo River, Guyana

## DUES NOTICE

It's time once again to renew your annual membership. OCAS dues are \$15 per household and may be paid at the monthly meetings, online at our website <http://www.okc-audubon.org> or mailed to Nancy Vicars, Treasurer, 2341 NW 160th St., Edmond, OK 73013





## Bird of the Month: Killdeer

*By Grace Huffman*

Oklahoma gets a lot of shorebirds that migrate through the state as we get into spring. One that doesn't migrate is the noisy Killdeer, a plover that you will find all over the place.

Killdeer are robin sized birds that are brown above, white below, with two chest bands that look kind of like necklaces. In flight, you

might see the beautiful rust-orange on the tail. And when the sun hits just right, you can get a good look at the vibrant orange eyes.

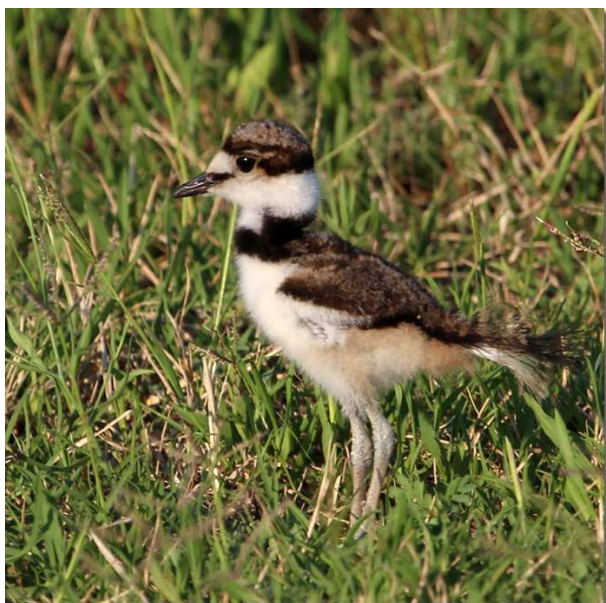
Killdeer are very widespread, breeding well up into Canada and wintering in northern South America. Through most of the US they are nonmigratory, including here in Oklahoma. You're likely to find them across fields with short grass or where livestock have been grazing, mudflats, or near the shoreline. It's not unusual for me to hear them before I see them, their loud *kill-dee* call giving them away.

In the summer, they will nest on the ground scraping out a bare patch to lay eggs in, often accessorizing the nest after the eggs are laid. According to [aboutbirds.org](http://aboutbirds.org), one nest here in the state ended up being built with over 1,500 pebbles!. Killdeer lay 4-6 eggs and will defend them from predators by acting



wounded in a well known "broken wing" display. If they nest in a field with horses or cattle, they will instead make themselves look as big as possible to try and get the creatures to change their path. Baby killdeer are adorable, and very well camouflaged little fluff balls. I got to see one this summer and take photos of it with an adult nearby, clearly letting me know it wasn't happy I had seen them. I took some photos and backed away.

Despite a slight decline over the years, Killdeer are listed as least concern. They will adapt readily to human modified habitat, but window collisions and pesticides are still threats. Next time you're out birding, keep an ear and an eye out for these noisy plovers!





# Recorder's Report

## January 2023

January has been an exciting month for birding in Central Oklahoma. The big news has been the presence of a Slaty-back Gull at Lake Hefner and in McClain County. After close examination of photos from both locations Joe G. thinks they are the same bird. The last reported sighting for January was by Chase M. on the NE portion of Lake Hefner. While well out of its home range, a google search will show that Slatys have a tendency to wander. The first verified US sighting was in 1983/1984 from St. Louis, Missouri to Alton, Illinois.



Guyla Mayo



Slaty-backed Gull, Lake Hefner, OKC

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jim A reported 4 Iceland Gulls, Thayer's type, at Lake Hefner along with 4 Lesser Black-backed Gulls. There have been several reported sightings on Lake Hefner of Lesser Black-backed Gulls as well as in Payne, Cleveland, Canadian, and McClain Counties.

Although slightly out of our Central Oklahoma Counties, the Mexican Duck first sighted in December at Foss Lake (Custer County) was spotted once again on January 7 by Joe G. There have been no reports since.

A Red-throated Loon was reported at Sooner Lake (Payne and Noble Counties) by Landon N on the 14<sup>th</sup>. On the 15<sup>th</sup> one was sighted at Lake Hefner and continued there with the last sighting reported on the 29<sup>th</sup> by Jeremy B. In January at Lake Hefner a Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon and numerous Common Loons have been spotted.

Also, at Lake Hefner a Black-legged Kittiwake was reported by Larry M on the 15<sup>th</sup>.



Black-legged Kittiwake. ©Trina Arnold, Horsefly Photography

Raptors were present in good numbers in Central Oklahoma with Red-tailed Hawks reported in all 12 counties and Red-shouldered Hawks right behind at 11 counties. Northern Harriers, Coopers, Sharp-shinned, and (happy to say) Bald Eagles in 8 and 9 counties. American Kestrels were also in all 12 Counties.

As for Sparrows, Harris Sparrows (10 Counties) followed by Dark-eyed Juncos (9), White-crowned (8), Song (7), Field (7), and Fox Sparrows (7) made up the majority of recorded Sparrow sightings.

This is just a sampling of birds reported in Central Oklahoma. The more we use eBird, ABA Birding News, and OKBIRDS List Serv the more accurate and useful information can be.

Esther M. Key retired as Recorder effective January 2023 after many years of doing a great work keeping us informed of bird sightings in Central Oklahoma. She will be missed. As I take over the position please feel free to email me at [guyla1mae@gmail.com](mailto:guyla1mae@gmail.com) with questions or comments.

The information for this report was gathered on January 30 and 31 from eBird, ABA Bird News, and Oklahoma List Serve. Any errors are solely mine!



# Nesting season in full swing for Jack and Carol

By Terri Underhill

I am so thankful Jack and Carol, the resident Great Horned Owls in my north Edmond yard, have taken to their new nest. This is their third tree since I invited them to my yard many years ago. Here's a photo showing Jack in 2017 and this season. He's a bit broader now but no less handsome.

I was surprised to see that Carol laid her first egg a bit earlier this year on January 29 and the second on Feb 1st. Last year the first egg was laid on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and the second egg on February 8th. I don't have exact dates prior to last year since I didn't have a camera above the nest until last season.

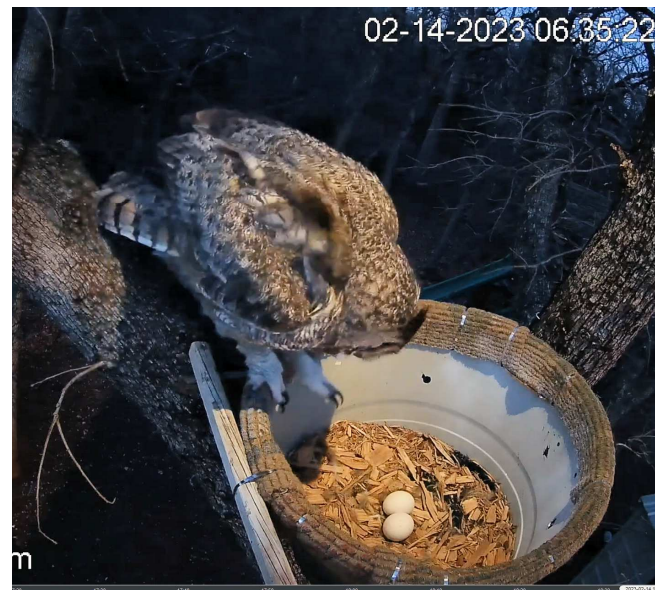
Each evening Jack hunts for prey and calls Carol to the roosting tree. Jack only brings prey to the nest when it is small enough to swallow whole. The scent of prey will attract predators. The day we had a bit of snow, Jack lovingly brought a mouse to Carol so she could stay on the eggs and keep



them warm. Once the eggs hatch, Jack will bring in prey to Carol on the nest to feed the young. Jack will keep a watchful eye on Carol and the owlets especially when they start branching out at four weeks old.

The squirrels have really been pestering Carol while she is in the nest. One day Jack flew in and knocked a squirrel out of the tree after the squirrel got too close for the third time. I tend to keep the 360 camera cropped in close on Carol but since the camera only caught Jack's wing as he swooped in, I now keep the camera at a wider view to not miss any more of Jack's heroic acts.

My new 360 camera has been great during the day for spotting Jack when he is roosting nearby. When I have time in the evenings around 6:15, I try to locate Jack with the 360 cam so I can catch Carol going to him when she leaves the nest. It is quite a challenge to keep track of them with all my trees. During the day



when Jack is roosting it is amazing to watch small birds fearlessly get within inches of his head. I find it amazing he doesn't just gobble them up on the spot. But I guess it is as much about the hunt as the kill when he searches for prey.

So next month will be a very busy time for Jack and Carol with the owlets arriving the first week of March. Last year the first egg hatched in 33 days and the second a few days later. I hope to get some good video having two cameras recording. I will add a new video to YouTube in the next day or so. You can see my videos here- <https://www.youtube.com/@okiebirdnerd/videos> or go to YouTube and search for Okiebirdnerd. My website is [okiebirdcam.com](https://www.okiebirdcam.com) I have two cameras on the owls, a camera on my birds and another on my deer feeder. The deer are more abundant early morning and late afternoon.

I hope you enjoy this year's nesting season with my owls, Jack and Carol. They are truly a blessing to me. By our next meeting, I should have names for the new weeks-old owlets. If you have any questions just give me a holler. I give a hoot about you.

# Minutes of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society Meeting

January 17, 2023  
By Patti Muzny, Secretary

The meeting was opened at 7:00 PM at the Will Rogers Garden Center by President Bob Holbrook. Nancy Vicars presented a treasurer's report distributed copies. Cash on hand as of January 17, 2023, was \$7,741.41. The minutes of the December 19, 2022, meeting were approved as published in the newsletter.

The next meeting will be held at the Will Rogers Garden Center on Monday, February 20, 2023, at 7:00 PM.

There were two visitors. The club welcomed Trina Arnold, who has joined OCAS, but was attending for the first time. One new member from Altus has joined.

New Business: Guyla Mayo, who has stepped up to take over the club's recorder duties from Esther Key, talked about the duties of the recorder and spoke about possible changes and asked for feedback from members.

Numbers of Snow Geese are quite impressive at Sequoyah NWR this winter and a Mexican Duck has been seen at Foss Reservoir, near Butler, OK, in Western OK.

Patti High asked for volunteers to provide refreshments for our future meetings.

Another very enlightening program was presented by Dr. Leslie Cole, D.V.M. Dr. Cole spoke about avian flu.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Muzny  
Secretary

## Refreshments

Refreshment Volunteers for Feb. 20, 2023:

**Snacks:** Patti High, Terri Underhill, Ann Sherman and Cheryl Allen

**Ice&Drinks:** John Eagleston



## BLOOMS FOR BIRDS:

SUSTAINABLE GARDENING FOR ATTRACTING AND SUPPORTING BIRDS,  
BEES, AND OTHER WILDLIFE

Saturday, March 11, 9am-3:45pm

### Kerr-McGee Auditorium at Oklahoma City University's Meinders School of Business

The Oklahoma Gardening School is the state's premier annual horticultural symposium that brings together hundreds of gardeners of all levels to learn from experts. Topics presented by renowned naturalists, authors, and horticulturists are timely and applicable to the cultivation of plants in Oklahoma and your own garden.

Birds add a delightful element to any landscape and play a crucial role in creating healthy gardens and natural ecosystems by helping to control pests, pollinate plants and spread seeds.



Mark Howery, ODWC

This year's program features speakers including OKC Audubon Society's Mark Howery, representing the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, who will showcase a range of birds to attract to your garden and how to design and plant gardens to attract and sustain them.

You will learn how to be an active participant in helping birds and wildlife thrive in urban, suburban and rural home gardens.



The annual [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) (GBBC) is Friday, February 17 through Monday, February 20. The GBBC was one of the first online projects to collect information on wild birds and was also instrumental in the creation of eBird back in 2002. Now there are more ways than ever to [participate and share your love of birds!](#)

**If you're new to birding, participate with Merlin:** beginning bird admirers can participate in the GBBC using [Merlin Bird ID](#)—simply identify birds and [save them with the app](#) anytime February 17-20.

**If you're already eBirding, participate with eBird:** go birding for at least 15 minutes anytime February 17-20, count all the birds you see or hear, and enter your observations via the [GBBC website](#) or [eBird Mobile app](#). *If you haven't used eBird since the last GBBC, take the [free eBird Essentials course](#) for a refresher.*

And make sure to check in with the [eBird Live Submissions Map](#) this weekend. The hottest times to watch this map are likely to be 4-9 pm (Eastern Standard Time or GMT -5) on Sunday and Monday. The best hour may be 5 pm (EST) on Sunday night when 3000+ checklists are usually submitted.

## OKC AUDUBON SOCIETY

### Financial Report for 2022

CASH ON HAND 12/31/2021 \$8,424.04

#### INCOME:

Membership dues	1,145.61
Checking Acct. interest	60.61
Donations	60.00
Car decals	<u>9.96</u>
	1,276.18
	<u>+1,276.18</u>
	9,700.22

#### EXPENSES:

Meeting room rent	461.00
Speaker honorarium	250.00
Laptop purchase	1,117.04
Club picnic supplies	238.75
Membership dues	<u>25.00</u>
	2,091.79
	<u>-2,091.79</u>

CASH ON HAND 12/31/2022 \$7,608.43

## Endangered Bahamas bird may be lost from island following 2019 hurricane

Source: University of East Anglia

The endangered Bahama Warbler may be surviving on just one island following Hurricane Dorian's devastation in 2019, according to researchers. A new study shows the bird's distribution and ecology on Grand Bahama before the hurricane struck. But the team says that the warbler may now only survive on neighboring Abaco island, after hurricane Dorian destroyed the bird's forest habitat on Grand Bahama. The research comes from the same team that found what is thought to have been the last living Bahama Nuthatch, previously thought to have been extinct.