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

The Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes:

*Dianne Hague, Poteau
June Gerber, Weatherford
Evelyn Wilkins-Green, Edmond*

Wildlife Photography

The speaker for our June 21 program will be OKC Audubon’s own Conservation Chairman Ann Sherman with a presentation entitled (possibly “A Wild Woman’s Wild Wonderings While Wandering Wildly for Wildlife.”) Highlighted will be her wildlife photography including birds among some of her other professional photography.

Native of Detroit, Michigan, Ann was surrounded by car making. So, in Oklahoma she authored a book about Oklahomans who have car collections. A current project is a book about Oklahoma’s weird and wonderful spots you can visit. Ann is also published in numerous books on architecture, art and folk music.



She has worked for five TV stations, one newspaper and is also a mother who enjoys teaching. Once the COVID problems die down, she hopes to continue teaching endeavors.

Ann has been a painter since childhood. While in art school she discovered photography. She opened her own photo business in 1995 and continues her professional photography to this day. Initially, she photographed people, but then switched to architecture. Photographing artwork is also an enjoyment.

For her own pleasure Ann’s photography includes birds, night shots, landscapes, historical architecture and astrophotography. She is always adventuring into new things.

Personally, Ann has a concern of people preserving their family histories. Every Thanksgiving she is popular for photographing family celebrations and asks that the prints be passed to future generations.

Our meetings are held September through June on the third Monday of each month. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Visitors are always welcome.

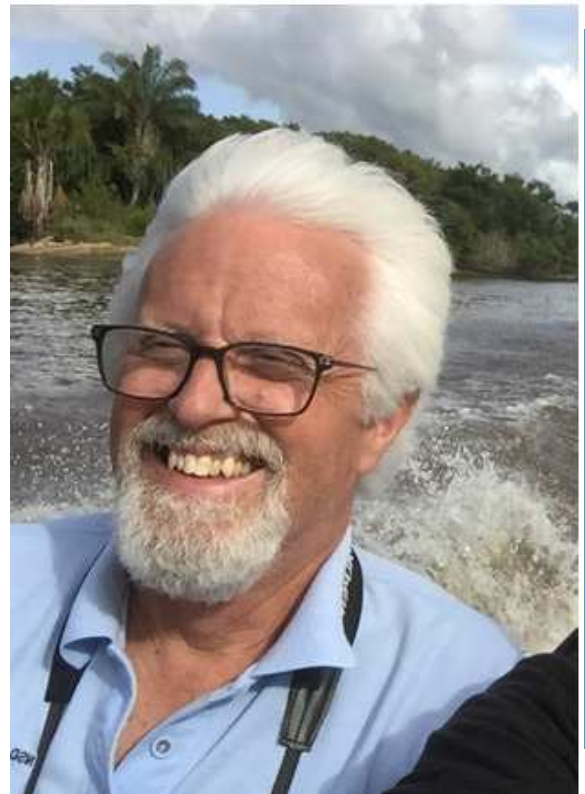
Meeting Location:

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

IMPORTANT! The June meeting will be held on **TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022.**
Regular time and location.

President's Perspective

As we wrap up this season's OKAS meetings, we also will be losing one of our long-time members--Betz Hacker has chosen to abandon the confines of Oklahoma City while seeking "a better life" by retiring to that Mecca of retirees--Arizona. I want to thank her first for her years of service to our club as President, field trip organizer, Christmas Count participant, and friend. At our last meeting she gave me a number of birding books she claimed she would not be needing nor had room for in her new digs, and I was surprised by another donation. I was not aware of her prolific talent as an artist! I was given a large stack of her beautiful bird paintings that will be of excellent use/value for our nature center here in Wewoka Woods. I'm sure many of you already well knew of her interest in painting but for me it was a new revelation. Betz, you will be missed around our OKAS gatherings and field trips! Arizona is not that far away so don't become a stranger to these lands. A big hug and Bon Voyage wishes to you from all of us back here in OKC!

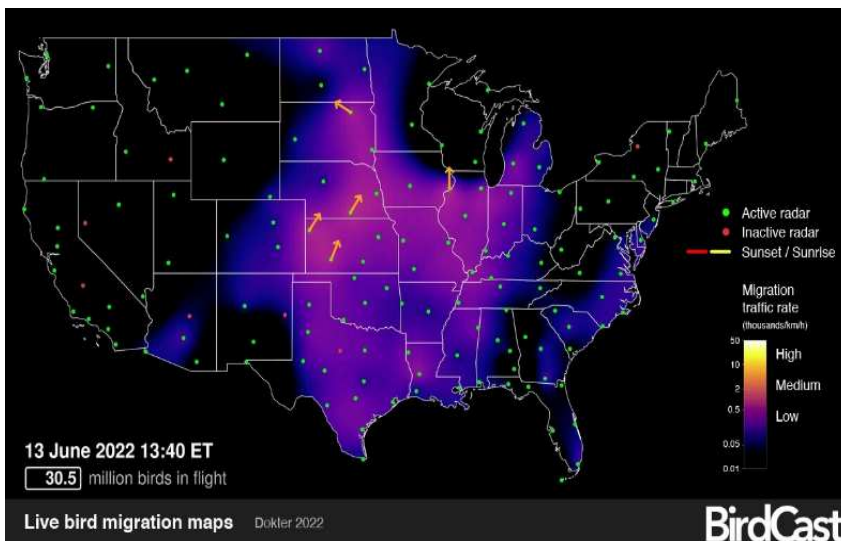


Bob Holbrook on the Essequibo River, Guyana

Now for a short note on another issue that has come to my attention. Binoculars. We're heading into a summer of birding fun and our binoculars are essential. However, it also seems that as we age (just a bit), our eyes do the same and our binoculars seem to not be quite as sharp as they used to be. (Now I know that for many of us what I'm about to explain is well understood so the rest of this note might be hohum...but many of us bought our binoculars many years ago when our eyesight was a pleasant 20/20 and never actually had to make any adjustments.) So here's a simple way to check and see if your binoculars are indeed keeping up with your eyes. Go outside (window glass distorts) and pick something maybe 50-100 yards away like a telephone pole. Close your right eye and by using the center focus, adjust until your left eye see the pole perfectly clear. Then close your left eye and using your right eye only, focus the right eyepiece until your right eye sees the same pole exactly clear as your left eye had done before. Your right eyepiece has a tiny scale along the edge with an indicator that shows where the focus point is. Leave it there and occasionally check it to make sure it hasn't been moved--and on to great summer birding y'all. See you again in September. And don't forget--come back with some great tales.

—Bob Holbrook, *alias Inca Tern*

See How Many Migratory Birds Are Passing Over Your County



The [BirdCast](#) program at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is exploring these unseen movements with its new Migration Dashboard. The Dashboard reveals bird migration in localized detail previously unavailable to the general public. The Dashboard shows how many birds are estimated to have flown over a particular county in the lower 48 states on any given night during migration, update in near-real time. It shows how many birds are currently aloft, how fast they are going, what direction they are headed, how high they're flying, and how the ebb and flow of their movements during the night compares to historic patterns. If you're not a night owl, you can catch up with the previous night's action the next day.



Bird of the Month: Dickcissel

By Grace Huffman

It's June, and that means that fields everywhere are filled with one of the sounds of summer: singing Dickcissels. Some of my earliest birding memories involve riding out to Piedmont to what was then a series of large wheat fields to watch the sunset and listen to the meadowlarks and Dickcissels.

They are sparrow-sized birds that are streaky brown on the back and tail, with yellow on the face and chest. Males are usually brighter yellow and have a black bib. Both males and females have a hefty bill. Even though they may look like

sparrows, they are actually in the same family as cardinals and buntings. They spend their summers across much of the central United States in pastures and fields, and you will usually find a decent number out for a drive in the country, or anywhere there are large fields with taller grass. This spring I saw what was probably the biggest flock of Dickcissels I'd ever seen with roughly 250 of them in a field feeding with Bobolinks. But that's a small number compared to other migratory flocks that can number in the thousands. On their wintering grounds in South America those flocks can reach millions of birds.

They nest near the ground, with the female building a cup nest to hold her eggs. Her brood will consist of 3-6 eggs, and she may raise a second brood as well. However, nests have been found as high as 10 feet off the ground where there was taller vegetation.

Dickcissels are currently considered to be of low concern, but are still facing a decline in population. The biggest threats are loss of habitat as fields are converted for development, or hayfields are mown before their young fledge. On their wintering grounds in Ven-

ezuela they are considered pests as they eat the grain crops. Huge numbers have been killed by wintering flocks being sprayed with pesticides at night at their roosting sites. Changing agricultural practices and crops, as well as the reduced number of Dickcissels means less is being eaten by the birds, but they are still targeted.



Dickcissel ©Grace Huffman

Recorder's Report

May 2022

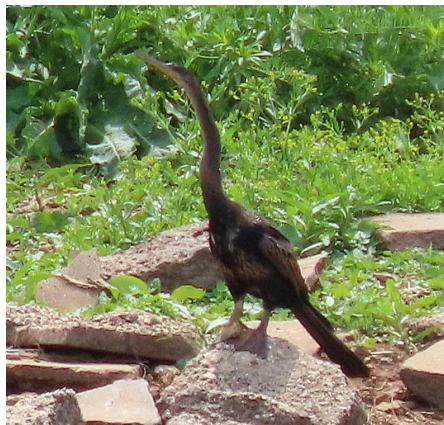
As the last spring migrants pass through central Oklahoma, some migrants are beginning to settle down to start their June breeding season. A variety of new migrants were reported including Shorebirds, Flycatchers, Warblers, plus Bobolinks in six counties and Yellow-billed Cuckoos in seven. Unusual sightings included Cassin's Sparrows in 3



Whimbrel

counties and a flyover Crested Caracara. On April 25 Trina Arnold added **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** in Midwest City. On April 29 Zach DuFran came across **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at Lake Thunderbird South Sentinel. On April 30th Alexa Walke detected **American Redstart** at Lake Stanley Draper Marina; Jerry Vanbebber found **Whimbrel** at Lake Thunderbird SP East Sentinel; Steven Glynn spotted **Yellow-breasted Chat** at Lexington WMA; Someone tallied **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** at Lake Thunderbird SP West Sentinel; and Alex Harman noted **Bobolink** at Cushing WTP in Payne County.

On May 1st Scott Loss documented **Anhinga** at Cushing WTP in Payne County; and Rondi Large recognized Spotted Sandpiper at Hickory Hollow in Seminole County.



Anhinga © Scott Loss

On the 2nd Braden Farris counted Whimbrel at Lake Hefner; Scott Loss got **Common Tern** at Lake Carl Blackwell; Mike Yough identified Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Cushing WTP; and Logan Kahle located Bobolink near Dover in Kingfisher County. On the 3rd Trina Arnold observed **Sanderling** at Lake Hefner Prairie Dog Point; Brian McLaughlin recorded Yellow-breasted Chat on Tinker Air Force Base; Cody Delano saw Buff-

breasted Sandpiper along Ten Mile Flats in Norman; Mike Yough viewed American Redstart at The Botanic Garden at OSU; and Scott Loss verified **Least Tern** at Boomer Lake Park.

On the 4th AiLeng Chan confirmed **Blackburnian Warbler** at Martin Park Nature Center in OKC; Joe Grzykowski noticed Wilson's Phalarope and Pectoral Sandpiper at Adkins Hill Sod Farm and Grasshopper Sparrow at Goldsby Sod Farm in McClain County. On the 5th Brian Marra reported Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Lake Stanley Draper and Bobolink and **Western Sandpiper**



Ruddy Turnstone

at Midwest Blvd Sod Farms; Mike Yough turned up Yellow-breasted Chat at Lone Chimney Lake in Payne County and Piping Plover at Lake Carl Blackwell; and Scott Loss discovered Buff-breasted Sandpiper in Stillwater. On the 6th Sabrina Jones photographed **Ruddy Turnstone** at Meridian Technology Center Pond in Stillwater.

On the 7th Curtis Stewart had **Alder Flycatcher** at OSU Arboretum; Mark Howery encountered a flock of Bobolink at Slaughterville in Cleveland County; Sarah Bland added Pileated Woodpecker near Wewoka in Seminole County; and Dailee Fagnant came across Painted Bunting and Dickcissel at Wynnewood in Garvin County. On the 9th Scott Loss detected **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at The Botanic Garden at OSU; and Landon Neumann found **Magnolia Warbler** at Couch Park in Stillwater.



Magnolia Warbler © Kevin Wilson

On the 11th Rhett Raible tallied Bobolink at Mulhall in Logan County. On the 12th Scott Loss spotted **Acadian Flycatcher** in Payne County; and Rhett Raible noted Yellow-billed Cuckoo in Mulhall. On the 13th Steve Stone recognized **Willow Flycatcher** at Lake

Hefner Stars and Stripes Park and Least Tern at Prairie Dog Point; Scott Loss counted **Veery** at Ghost Hollow in Payne County; and Kalen Melton described **Black-necked Stilt** at Rose Lake in Canadian County.

On the 14th Brian Marra identified **Mourning Warbler** at Myriad Botanical Gardens in OKC; Trina Arnold got **Black-bellied Plover** at Lake Hefner; Grace Huffman located Black-necked Stilt at Stinchcomb WR Gate 1; Michael Reichert observed Willow Flycatcher at Teal Ridge Wetland; Jacob Kirkland recorded **Scarlet Tanager** at Calumet in Canadian County; and Jake Gerlt photographed Least Tern at Lake Overholser Route 66 Park. On the 15th Brian Marra and Grace Huffman saw Buff-breasted Sandpiper at



Chestnut-sided Warbler © Brian Marra

Sod by Sherry in Yukon; and Jacob Kirkland viewed Bell's Vireo and Grasshopper Sparrow on his BBA block in Pottawatomie County.

On the 16th Brian Marra verified **Black-throated Green Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher** and Willow Flycatcher at

Lake Stanley Draper Marina; and Ethan Becker heard Grasshopper Sparrow at Rush Springs in Grady County. On the 17th Brian McLaughlin confirmed Olive-sided Flycatcher at Bluff Creek Trails in OKC. On the 18th Scott Loss discovered **Canada Warbler** at Couch Park and Mourning Warbler at The Botanic Garden at OSU; and Braden Farris encountered Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Prairie Prime Ranch. On the 19th Landon Neumann heard and recorded Scarlet Tanager at Couch Park; Cody Delano noticed Alder Flycatcher at Lake Stanley Draper Marina; and Joseph Saunders reported Chestnut-sided Warbler at Ray Trent Park in Del City.



Canada Warbler © Scott Loss

On the 20th Landon Neumann heard and recorded **Cassin's Sparrow** in Stillwater. On the 21st Brian Marra had Ruddy Turnstone at Arcadia Lake in Edmond; Braden Farris

documented Cassin's Sparrow at Prairie Prime Ranch and turned up Bobolink at Wellston in Lincoln County. On the 22nd Landon Neumann described a flyover **Crested Caracara** at Teal Ridge Wetland in Stillwater. On the 24th Jake Gerlt photographed Yellow-billed Cuckoo west of Mustang. On the 26th Robert Harding spotted Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Wes Watkins Lake Campground in



Least Bittern

Pottawatomie County. On the 29th Mike Yough found **Least Bittern** at Teal Ridge Wetland. On June 1st Devin Bosler reported a Cassin's Sparrow in NW OKC which was photographed sitting on a thistle by Brian Marra the next day.

In the Central Oklahoma area during May **226** species

were reported with **30** new species which brings the year's total at **281**. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds. Information is accessed at: 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 May 30 & 31, 2022); and occasionally from Facebook, and the OKBIRDS List. I can be contacted at emkok@earthlink.net. Esther M. Key, Editor.

Refreshments

The following folks will be providing refreshments for the Tuesday, June 21 OCAS meeting:

SNACKS: Patti High, Nancy Vicars, Sue Woodson, Gaylynn Boice

ICE/DRINKS: Randy Henthorn

SALT PLAINS NWR, A WINNER

Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) has been described as the largest expanse of salt flats east of the Rockies. The salt flats encompass approximately 32,000 acres and are bordered to the east by the Great Salt Plains Reservoir, ~8,700 acres. The salt flats are also traversed by west branch of the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River, Cottonwood Creek, Clay Creek, and Spring Creek. This provides for numerous miles of open shoreline habitat for shorebirds and other waterbird species.

In April, the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) announced that Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge was the 2022 winner of the annual Outstanding WHSRN Site Award. The refuge, located in Alfalfa

county in north-central Oklahoma, is a massively important stopover site for migratory shorebirds.

Salt Plains NWR provides habitat for high numbers of Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, and White-rumped Sandpiper during spring migration, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Sanderling, Least Sandpiper, and Stilt Sandpiper during fall migration, and Spotted Sandpiper and Baird's Sandpiper during both fall and spring.

The Salt Plains NWR joined WHSRN in 1994 as a Site of Regional Importance for shorebirds. In 1996, the refuge began participating in the International Shorebird Survey (ISS), tracking the number of shorebirds using the refuge during migration. Then in 2019, its status was upgraded to a Site of International Importance, due to improved understanding of the significant role the refuge plays in supporting more than 20 percent of the North



Snowy Plover © Patricia Velte

American breeding population of Snowy Plovers.

The Outstanding WHSRN Site award is an honorary award intended to recognize and honor WHSRN sites in the U.S. that are living up to the true spirit of WHSRN, with partners demonstrating outstanding work in ongoing conservation and site management for shorebirds.

Salt Plains is also on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance, sheltering over 300 species of birds and is a key stopover site for vast numbers of migratory waterbirds, including up to 40,000 American White Pelicans, 100,000 geese, 70,000 ducks, and thousands of Sandhill Cranes, in addition to the shorebirds already cited.

Let's talk about water

by Ann Sherman

I've been reading government documents. Reputable news coverage. We hear a lot about drought locally...but it certainly isn't just our local problem. An estimated 55 million people globally are affected by droughts every year. Drought threatens peoples livelihoods, increases risk of death and disease and fuels mass migration. Water scarcity impacts 40% of the world's population and as many as 700 million people are at risk of being displaced as a result of drought by 2030. Those figures are almost incomprehensible. I have been reading a few pandemic novels lately and nothing they have written about comes close to being that scary.

Oklahoma is included in the states with the worse droughts. More than 20% of land in Western states was classified as experiencing extreme or exceptional drought. We have had record breaking wildfires, long lasting heat waves and dwindling water supplies. Heading into summer it is looking pretty grim.

A hotter atmosphere sucks more moisture from the soil. The hotter it gets the thirstier the atmosphere becomes. There has been an 8% increase in this evaporative demand since the 1980s. This trend is generally happening across the country. Our plants we depend on to feed us are under incredible stress. We are entering unfamiliar territory here. The prolonged drought could significantly reduce wheat yields on the southern Plains. With the war in Ukraine we could be looking at a global food crisis.

Before I begin my own pandemic novel that focuses on water let me leave you with some encouraging news. Is there anything we can do to mitigate the effects of drought?

Yes. #1 is don't waste water. Turn off the water when you brush your teeth. Take a shower instead of a bath. Water your plants at night to reduce evaporation.

Save electricity. It takes 15 gallons of water in the form of coolant or steam to generate a single kilowatt-hour of power.

Pay attention to fire safety. Be mindful of starting a campfire or gender reveal fireworks. Just don't do it.

Switch up your landscaping. Use drought tolerant plants. Less lawn is always an excellent idea if you ask me. Pay attention to mulching and composting. You can keep your soil wetter longer and produce a cooling effect on your environment.

We can look to San Antonio for inspiration. They were sued by the Sierra Club for using too much water from the Edwards Aquifer. That was in the early 90s. San Antonio has grown 80% in the last 30 years but has decreased its per-person water use by 40%.

The city offers money to convert grass into patios, along with other conservation efforts involving irrigation, desert landscaping, and water flow sensors. They offer rebates for residents who install pool filters.

It may seem like a drop in the bucket, pardon the pun, but if everyone did their part in conserving water and power I think we could make a difference.



Minutes of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society Meeting

May 16, 2022

By Patti Muzny, Secretary

The meeting was opened at 7:00 PM at the Will Rogers Garden Center by President, Bob Holbrook. Patti Muzny presented a treasurer's report prepared by Nancy Vicars and distributed copies. Cash on hand as of May 16, 2022, was \$7,784.52. The minutes of the April 18, 2022, meeting were approved as published in the May newsletter.

The next meeting will be held at the Will Rogers Garden Center on Monday, June 20, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

Visitors were introduced and welcomed.

There was no old business.

Terri Underhill announced that the Underhills will once again host the OCAS June picnic on Saturday, June 18, 2022. The OCAS will provide the protein and members can provide sides and desserts.

President Bob Holbrook announced that the new Nature Center at We-woka Woods is almost ready to be occupied. Hal Yocum and Betz Hacker reported several exciting birds on their recent trip to SE Arizona, which included nine or ten hummingbirds, an Elegant Trogon and Arizona Woodpecker. They found a total of 200 species and five life birds for Hal.

Hal also reported a Black-chinned Hummingbird at Mitch Park.

Steve Davis and Mary Lane also took a trip to SE Arizona and added 20 life birds to their list. One of their favorites was the Red-faced Warbler on Mt. Lemon. Warren Harden saw a flock of around 100 Mississippi Kites while driving east of Chickasha on May 14, 2022. Sharon Henthorn noted that the area around Booker T. Washington Park on NE 4th Street has been a productive location in which to watch for spring migrants.

Patti High asked for volunteers to provide September refreshments.

We were treated to another entertaining and outstanding program on Bird Photography by Duane Angles.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Muzny
Secretary



Summer Birding Festivals

Martinfest

June 25, 9 am – 4 pm

Waupun, Wisconsin

wisconsinpurplemartins.org

Global Birdfair

July 15-17

Rutland, United Kingdom

globalbirdfair.org

Sedona Hummingbird Festival

July 29-31

Sedona, Arizona

hummingbirdsociety.org/sedona-hummingbird-festival-2022

Southwest Wings Birding and Nature Festival

August 3-6

Sierra Vista, Arizona

swwings.org

Southeast Arizona Birding Festival

August 10-14

Tucson, Arizona

tucsonaudubon.org/festival

Hummingbird Festival in Cook County Forest Preserve

August 20, 9 am – 2 pm

Sagawau Environmental Learning Center,
Lemont, Illinois

fpdcc.com/event/hummingbird-fest/