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

## Welcome

The Oklahoma City Audubon Society welcomes:  
Stephanie Hoover, Edmond

## Visit an Eurasian Eagle Owl

**Our March 18 OKC Audubon speaker will be Dennis Smith accompanied by some avian and human helpers.**

Dennis is head of Raptors-Keep ([raptors-keep.com](http://raptors-keep.com)), an education and conservation group that specializes in birds of prey. Dennis and his helpers will feature some of their birds to include a Red-tailed Hawk, a Harris’s Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Turkey Vulture and the star of the show an Eurasian Eagle Owl.



Dennis is a dedicated conservationist, educator and falconer who has worked with birds of prey for over a decade. His involvement began in late 2009 when he became an apprentice falconer and started working with a rescue/rehabilitation organization specifically for birds of prey.

After volunteering a number of years and obtaining the required experience and knowledge, Dennis was able to obtain his own federal licenses and in 2017, he founded Raptors Keep with the express purpose of providing public education and a sanctuary for non-releasable birds of prey.

Bring your camera and friends and enjoy an evening with real birds, interesting people and great camaraderie.

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.

**Have you paid your 2024 Dues?**  
See page 5.

# President's Perspective

Creatures of habit—that's us, well, maybe most of us...many of us?...well, at least I am. Example: For many breakfast is very predictable: cup of coffee and a donut; they know it's not healthy "but it's the way I've always done it." For my wife it's a cup of tea and a slice of toast. I'm a little bit better (not much), it's a bowl of cereal and Silk, toast with peanut butter and jam, and a glass of OJ—routine, every day. I've always done it that way.

Birding. A long time ago, before all this high tech. We learned about rare appearances via a note in the ABA magazine usually 1-3 months after the fact. What showed up where, "well that must have been nice." Then local state organizations began publishing bird sightings in their monthly newsletters. Timing was down to 1-4 weeks (that's when OCAS started our "Reports." Members called in their findings, they were accumulated and printed. Then someone had the bright idea of establishing a local phone number folk could call and hear a listing of birds seen. They called it the Rare Bird Alert (RBA). The recording was run by one person who generally updated the recording each Monday or Tuesday after weekend reports

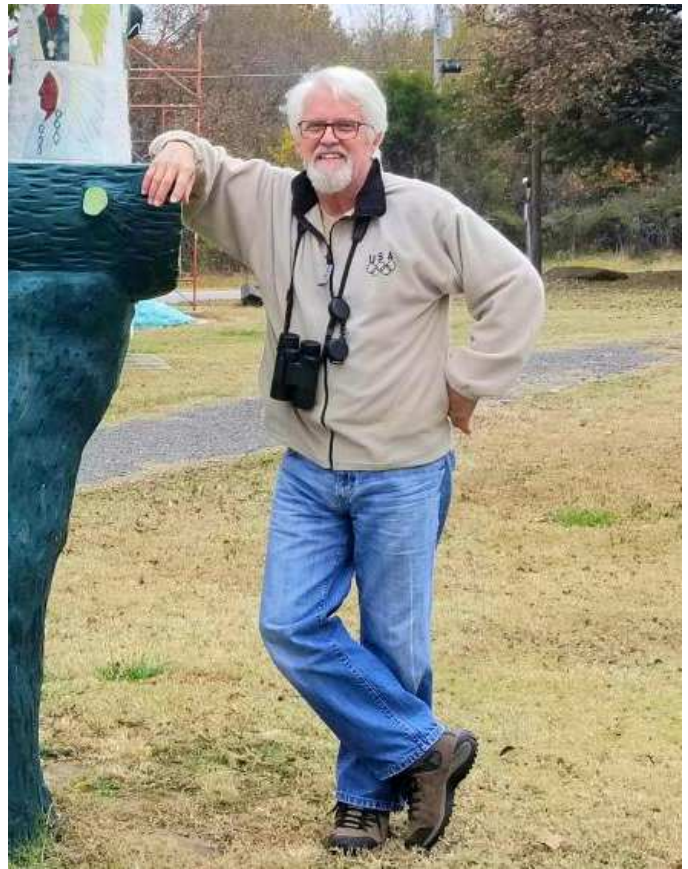
would be called in to the recorder's number. It was up to him or her to decide if the reported bird was valid enough to be included or not and most birders would then dial the RBA before the next weekend to decide places to go searching. Of course lag time was now down to only a few days. Still birds most often never paid attention to the fact that they were supposed to hang around at least 2 consecutive weekends for more birders to get to see them.

During those days, I was traveling internationally quite a bit for my work. I would take an overnight flight to London, sit all day waiting to catch the next leg—another night flight-- down to Jo'burg or Nairobi or Accra or... I got smart, I contacted a birder in London, gave him my "want list," he met me at the airport and we chased birds till he dropped me back off in time for my next flight. I was amazed! He had a cell phone and birders in England had a group number that they called in a bird being seen at that very moment. He took me to one spot where birders were watching, then his phone lit up, another message, we jumped in the car and off we went, then another message and another ... birders were crisscrossing southern England and we were doing the same seeing new birds in real time. By the end of the day, back at the airport, I had an awesome day, "want list" completed! I had never dreamed of such a system.

We've come a VERY long way since those days of printed monthly updates. "But this is the way we've always done it." I write all this because of a note from Guyla. She described what it takes for her to compile her monthly reports and wondered if all those hours were actually worth the effort. She asked "Does anyone actually find the list useful for birding?" The lists she makes don't actually go anywhere else, they serve only our immediate purpose—and is it a valid purpose? We have at least three websites now that list what is being seen—[E-bird](#), [iNaturalist](#), Oklahoma birds (on the [ABA](#)). Cell phone calls between birding friends is also there, (of course you must be a friend of the person out birding to hear from them). My friend Ernie Wilson called me the other day to share that he had just seen 200 Sandhill Cranes fly over his house flying north. I called a friend to tell him I just hear my first Parula of the Spring at my house. "But this is the way we've always done it."

Unless there's a strong reason—your comments and requests—to keep the Report going in our newsletter, Guyla would like to, instead, provide heads up notes on what species to expect migrating during the next 2-3 weeks and when there are no movements predicted like during non-migrating times, she can deal with conservation issues, etc.

What are your thoughts? Send a note to Guyla at [guyla1mae@gmail.com](mailto:guyla1mae@gmail.com) or to me at [incatern@msn.com](mailto:incatern@msn.com)







## Bird of the Month: Bald Eagle

By Grace Huffman

Spring is here, the trees are in blossom, and everything is turning green again. Birds that came for the winter are heading back on their journey north to breed. In the case of **Bald Eagles** however, our year-round population is increasing, and more are staying here to breed. Before the leaves fill in the trees, you'll often see Bald Eagle nests from a distance, as they are massive.

Across the vast majority of the United States, Bald

Eagles are migratory, moving far north to breed, and spending winters across the lower 48. But scattered throughout the map are large blotches that indicate they are there all year, and as they continue to thrive thanks to protections that have been established, this is obvious in the Oklahoma metro, where several nests have been found in the last few years.

Unfortunately, I'm not going to tell you where to find one of those nests, as right now they are in a part of their breeding season where they are highly sensitive to disturbances. If you do come across a nest, be mindful and keep your distance. The National Audubon Society has several tips when it comes to photographing nests, and they apply to viewing as well.

1. Consider where the nest is placed. Those found near human activity may have an increased tolerance for humans vs those in a more rural setting.
2. Be aware of when they are most sensitive. When they are laying eggs, a disturbance may cause them to abandon the nest. Or if the young are over 8 weeks old, they may jump from the nest before they are ready. Bad weather days also increase the vulnerability of chicks, so it's best to avoid photographing nest then too.
3. Distance and/or camouflage. The US Fish & Wildlife Service recommends staying at least 330 feet away, some states even have laws. Use that zoom lens, or digiscope with your binoculars to get a photo.
4. Use judgement. If the birds appear stressed, back away and give them more space.
5. Don't try to bait them. It's unethical and could be considered illegal.



Hopefully this spring you'll catch a glimpse of our national symbol, now staying around all year! And don't forget to keep an eye out once the all dark young ones leave the nest, it takes them 4-5 years to reach maturity and gain the striking adult plumage we know and love.

Reference: <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/winter-2017/five-rules-photographing-bald-eagle-nests#:~:text=U.S.%20Fish%20and%20Wildlife%20Service,photography%20set%20Dup%20isn%27t>

# Peter Kaestner Breaks the 10,000 Bird Barrier!

(from [aba.org](http://aba.org))



On February 9, 2024, Peter Kaestner reached 10,000 birds on his IOC life list with an Orange-tufted Spiderhunter, *Arachnothera flammifera*, in the Philippines.

On February 9, 2024, longtime ABA member and frequent *Birding* magazine contributor Peter Kaestner reached 10,000 birds on his life list. The ABA heartily congratulates Peter on this momentous achievement.

Peter is a now-retired career diplomat who has birded in seemingly every corner of the globe. His many previous contributions to *Birding* include a book review on Colombian field guides (<https://www.aba.org/a-trio-of-colombian-field-guides/>), a review of SE Asia field guides (<https://www.aba.org/offspring-of-hbw-lynx-and-birdlife-international-field-guides-for-southeast-asia/>), and a recent feature story on how he planned to close the gap to 10,000 birds (<https://www.aba.org/the-final-stretch/>). The forthcoming June issue of *Birding* will include an interview with Peter.

The 10,000-bird milestone is according to the taxonomy of the IOC (International Ornithological Congress), which recognizes a few more species than some other taxonomic authorities like eBird/Clements.

The ABA salutes Peter for his many decades of persistence and diligence, and for always being an exemplary ambassador for birds and birding.

## OOS Spring Meeting 2024 Schedule

The Oklahoma Ornithological Society will host its Spring meeting at Salt Plains State Park from April 26 to 28. All activities are free except the dinner event on Saturday evening.

## It's nesting season for Terri's Great Horned Owls!

Terri Underhill reported on March 14, day 34, that the single egg in the nesting barrel in her Edmond yard was hatching. The chick finally picked through the egg on March 15 in the early morning hours

"Little Guy has finally arrived! It seemed like a lifetime awaiting on this little Guy to hatch. I am so happy to know he finally made

it. I'm a little sad that he won't have a sibling to play with. But I know he will be stronger not having to compete for food. I thought every bird in the yard would be singing but it was dead silent other than a



squeaking board. I didn't even hear Jack (the male) hooting this morning... Maybe in his excitement, he is without words. Oh how I love my owl family. I am so blessed to have this gift I will cherish always.

"I hope you enjoy another year with Jack & Carol's little family. I decided to name the chick Little Guy after the kind person that gave me two new cameras after one of my new cams stopped working. I will be forever grateful to Guy for his generosity and kindness. Happy season 2024! Please enjoy, I give a hoot!"

Terri's webcams can be viewed at <http://okiebirdcam.com>

The Owl Videos:

<https://youtu.be/Sd96bdolLL0?si=IfAvAuzRZnw-66ux>



# Minutes of the OKC Audubon Society Meeting

## February 19, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM by Vice President, Cathy Chernausk. Attendance: 42 (including 4 visitors and 2 new members)

There were no minutes from the January meeting as that meeting was cancelled due to weather. The last meeting in December was our Christmas party.

Treasurer's reports for both January and February were approved as read.

Reach out to Nancy Vicars if you'd like to get involved with Sutton Center's Bald Eagle Survey Team or to report nest sightings.

Possible upcoming field trips to Ft. Cobb Lake or Wichita Mountains (no dates yet)

Oklahoma Ornithological Society (OOS) spring meeting is April 26-28 at Salt Plains. All cabins at the park are reserved for the event. Contact OOS if you'd like to rent one.

The March OCAS program will feature falconer, Dennis Smith who will bring live birds to the presentation.

Speaker Zach DuFran discussed the culture and birding in Ethiopia and showed pictures of various birds from his trips

The next meeting is will be held on Monday, March 18,2024

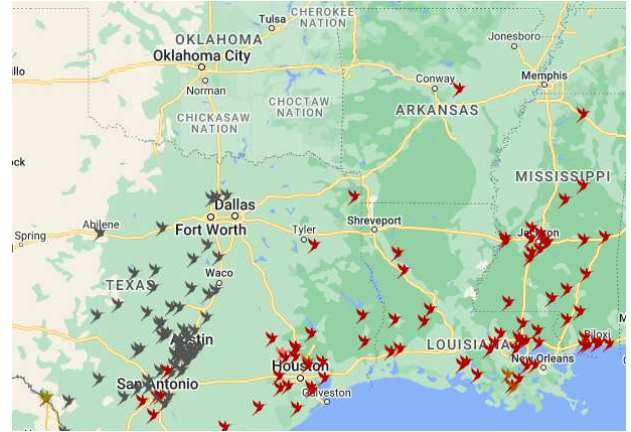
—Cole Penning, Secretary

## Refreshments

Thanks to the March Refreshment Volunteers:

Snacks: Guyla Mayo, Nancy Reed, Sue Woodson and Chris Eckart.

Ice/drinks: John Eagleston.



## Hummingbird Migration

As we go to press, this map shows Ruby-throated and Black-chinned Hummingbird migration.

## 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

## Breeding Bird Survey reaches final season

There are 583 randomly selected blocks of land in Oklahoma that need to be surveyed for birds during one spring and summer. Each block of land is about 3x3 miles in size, although you likely won't be able to visit every part of each block. Volunteers skilled at bird identification are needed to help with these bird surveys for the second breeding bird atlas. If you can identify the summer birds found in Oklahoma, and if you have transportation and some free time, please join the project! The Sutton Avian Research Center needs you to visit each block you sign up for at least once before May 15 and at least once after May 15 to look for as many species as you can find in each area, and to record some basic behavioral observations of birds that provide evidence of nesting, such as a bird carrying nesting material or food to a nest. A total of 10 hours or more should be spent surveying each block. They provide complete instructions, maps and data forms to volunteers. [Learn more here...](#)