

WildCare Oklahoma

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

Inger Giuffrida is the Executive Director of WildCare Oklahoma, the well known animal rescue facility near Noble, and will be the speaker at our October 21 meeting. For decades Wild-

Care has taken wounded animals of all kinds and nursed as many as possible back to health and returned them to the wild. Inger will give us an illustrated tour of the facility and relate why and how they do it.

Inger moved to Oklahoma from Washington, D.C. in 2004 and joined the WildCare team in 2019. She served in the U.S. Peace Corps in East Africa, directed a regional nonprofit women's economic development organization, started a microenterprise and financial wellness program within a nationally recognized federal community development credit union, and ran the field services division of a think tank in the nation's capital. For the past 22 years, she has operated a consulting business providing services for a wide variety of clients including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the FDIC, the CFPB, United Way Worldwide, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and many others, working in all 50 states and Canada. She has a B.S. from Miami University, M.B.A. from Western Michigan University, and CFRE from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University and is a graduate of Leadership Grand Rapids '98 and of Leadership Norman '19.



A lifelong animal lover, she lives on a mini-farm in Norman with her husband of 27 years, children, Sam and Sofia, and many four-legged and furry family members including Stella and Penelope, two American Guinea Hogs.

Come and hear Inger and bring a friend for good entertainment, education and 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.

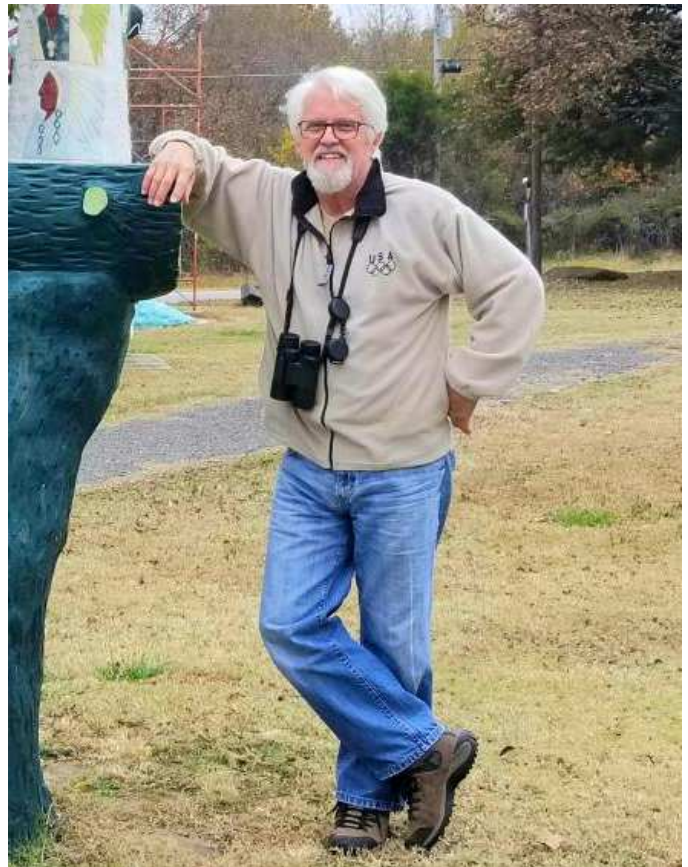
Meeting Location:

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

President's Perspective

I must admit that I chuckled—almost laughed. At our September OCAS meeting I picked up the book “Birding on Borrowed Time” by Phoebe Snetsinger. I think I mentioned in a previous article that I had the privilege of meeting her once while I lived in Illinois at the Yellow-billed Loon sighting in Rock Falls (February 26, 1986 to be exact).

So, I thought I'd enjoy reading and learning more about this incredible lady. It really is a fascinating book and I enjoyed her memories of many of the places I've also had the privilege of visiting—they brought back fun memories of my own. Now as I sit down and write, I've delved into her chapter titled “1998.” (The year before her untimely death) In this chapter she writes of her experience birding in Colombia during the difficult years of civil unrest and war. I've not birded that country precisely due to those dangers yet I could relate to her experience having birded Mozambique during their uncivil war—I visited that country several times from 1991-1995 as a Senior Manager in Food for Work projects under a Private Voluntary Agency.



In her chapter, Phoebe relates “As all of this background was going through my mind [risk of guerilla attacks, etc.], and as various friends and relatives were expressing concern and advising caution, a good friend sent me a quote from Helen Keller: ‘Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is a daring adventure or nothing.’ My friend’s addendum to this was: ‘We do have to remember that there is a fine line between adventure and stupidity!’ And on that note I went!

That is what made me almost laugh. All my trips to Mozambique might be seen as dangerous to many people, however, I went anyway, did what was needed to be done work-wise and always reserved a couple extra days for birding. There were no guides, no “Where-to-find” books and with serious civil war, limited or very poor access to birding spots, yet by the time I changed employment, my country list stood at 298. I'll only relate one of a dozen incidents due to space limits here.



Down south near the South African border there had been at one time an elephant reserve. Across the border in South Africa there was an excellent, well maintained elephant reserve. A request had come into our Agency for help in establishing a corridor that would connect the two reserves with a protected bi-national corridor that would allow the elephants to migrate back and forth under a modicum of protection. I was excited about the project because it was not only an excellent environmental project that our agency had not gotten much involvement in but it would also give me an excuse for a day of birding under an “Official” guise.

“Mister Bob”, Dwight Taylor, our agency’s country director, and the young lady from USAID (US Agency for International Development)

birding), myself, and our driver (a nature enthusiast). We headed south to meet a South African gentleman by the name of “Mister Bob” who was the spearhead for the project and resided in a small Mozambican (continued on page 6)

We put together a team of 4 persons: Dwight Taylor, our Agency’s country director (also a birder), a young lady USAID environmental project coordinator (also a



Bird of the Month: Sabine's Gull

By Grace Huffman

Lake Hefner has recently had some impressive rarities, with Sabine's Gull, Arctic Tern, and Common Tern all showing up last month. The Sabine's has lingered some into October, and as far as gulls go is really quite a pretty one.

Sabine's Gulls are small but striking arctic birds, breeding on the arctic tundra in Alaska and northern Canada. Then they migrate primarily down the west coast and out to sea, wintering in the waters of Mexico and farther south.

Adult breeding Sabine's Gulls have a beautiful dark gray head with a black border, and a black bill with a yellow tip, making it look like it had been dipped in yellow paint. Nonbreeding birds lose most of that gray hood, but still retain the yellow-tipped bill. Juveniles are a brownish gray above, and white below. They have an all dark bill. Young birds in their first winter look like a cross between the juveniles and nonbreeding adults, but that isn't commonly seen here. They don't get the paler bill tip until their first summer. No matter what the age, one of the most unique visuals is a Sabine's Gull in flight. In a pattern resembling an "M," the leading primaries are black, with a gray back and large white triangle in the trailing portion of the wing. Several other gulls have an M pattern, but none have one quite like this.

Overall, these birds are considered least concern, but being largely pelagic and nesting in the tundra, threats include pesticides, oil spills, and changing temperatures on land and in the ocean.

For much of September and even into October, 1-2 juvenile Sabine's Gulls have been reported at Lake Hefner, and for a brief stretch an adult still in breeding plumage was reported in Stillwater. I took this photo of a juvenile at Stars & Stripes Park eating half of a small fish. Just goes to show you never know what will show up when you get outside!



Sabine's Gull ©Grace Huffman

References: allaboutbirds.org.



Citizen Science

By Sharon Henthorn

Greetings, Birders. We all love to look for, listen to, and observe the birds in our local and distant travels.

One way to enjoy birding is by assisting in data-driven scientific activities. Cornell Lab of Ornithology is the premiere resource for encouraging ordinary citizens to collect data for the study of bird populations in North America and internationally.

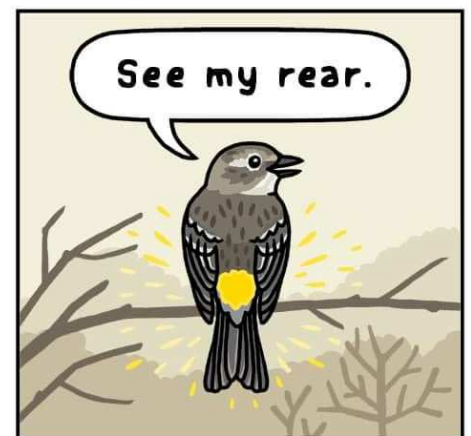
In upcoming newsletters, I will be acquainting you with citizen projects that can be done both near and far.

At the time of our October meeting, Cornell's October Big Day was set for October 12th, during which any birder could submit observations from that date. Online submissions to the Cornell Lab or through eBird are tallied to help in researching numbers, locations, and migration patterns. The next Global Big Day will be in May 2025.

In our own participation area, Jimmy Woodard and Nadine Varner were entertaining an unofficial Little Sit in their yard in Midwest City on October 16th, just for fun and camaraderie. Birds viewed or identified by any and all comers are tallied and compared with previous years. This has been a regular event sponsored by the OKC Audubon Society.

From December 14- January 5th every year, the Christmas Bird Count is conducted in multiple areas of the state and region so data can be tabulated for research. Birders can attend as many CBC events as are available. Jimmy Woodard is coordinating this year's OKC count, so please let him know if you want to participate.

On an unexpected note, I will mention the bird banding programs available periodically. This week at OKC Northeast/Zoo Lake Park I witnessed a WHITE rock pigeon resting on the grass near the lower sidewalk and later on a rock outcropping. This bird had a metal band on its leg as an identifier and I suspect had flown in from a good distance. I was unable to read the ID band.



birdland.com

California Condors in Arizona

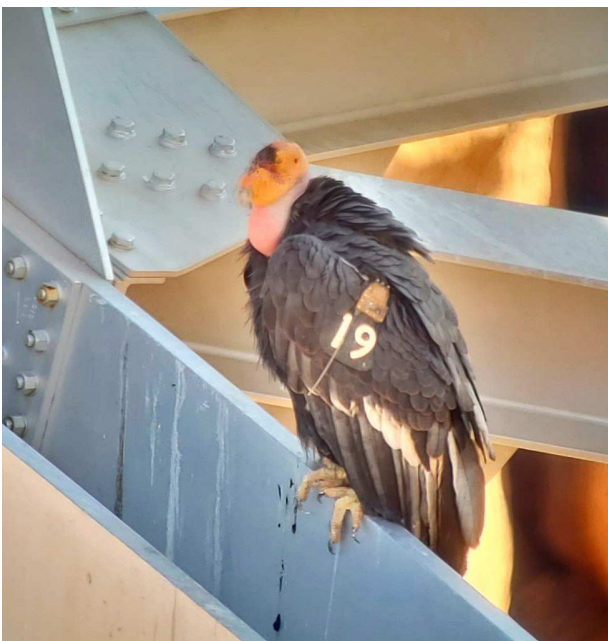
By Jimmy Woodard

Nadine and I decided to vacation in Arizona at the Grand Canyon during the first week of September. We were celebrating her birthday but a secondary objective was to see a California Condor.

Condors were raised in captivity and then released back into the wilds of California and Arizona in the last 15-20 years. They now have a breeding population in both states. In Arizona, most sightings occur around the Grand Canyon. On Tuesday Sept 3rd, we arrived at the Navajo Bridges at Marble Canyon on the Colorado River near Page and Lake Powell. This is roughly 50 miles northeast of Grand Canyon National Park. The bridge has been a well known spot for condor sightings for years.



California Condor © Jimmy Woodard/Nadine Varner



California Condor © Jimmy Woodard/Nadine Varner

We spotted two condors sitting on the metal framework of the bridges below the road decks. One bird had a wing tag of #19. The second bird was tagged as P8. We first saw #19 sitting but it took off and flew up-river to be joined by P8. Both birds flew back and perched on the bridges. We consulted a website for sightings called condor-spotting.com. We found out the two birds are a mated pair. The weather was hot, near 100 degrees so we didn't stay long.

After spending a couple of days camped near Grand Canyon, we came back to the bridge on the morning of Thursday Sept 5th. Temps were much cooler. We quickly found two birds different from Tuesday's sightings. Tagged birds were V6 and K3. We enjoyed showing several tourists the birds thru our scope. Everyone seemed to be thrilled to see them.

Minutes of the OKC Audubon Society Meeting September 18, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by President Bob Holbrook.

Attendance: 43, including 1 guest

We are back in session after our summer break! Members shared stories on interesting birds seen around Oklahoma as well as birding trips over the break.

Treasurer's reports for June, July, and August from Nancy Vicars were approved as read.

Jimmy and Nadine are hosting another Big Sit this year. They will provide mains for lunch, but please bring a side dish and a chair for sitting outside. It will take place on Wednesday, October 16 from 9 AM - 5 PM at their house in Midwest City.

Jimmy will also be taking over organizing the Christmas Bird Count, and Esther will continue helping. Please contact them to help determine areas for this year's CBC.

Sharon Henthorn will be heading the upcoming nominating committee. Nominees will likely be presented at the November meeting with elections occurring in December.

There are no scheduled field trips, but fall migration is ramping up. Trips may be added as the season goes.

The main speaker was Nadine Varner, who shared photos and information about her birding trip to Ecuador, along with Jimmy, Steve, and Mary.

The next OKC Audubon Society meeting will be held Monday, October 21, 2024 with Inger Giuffrida speaking on her work as Executive Director of WildCare Oklahoma.

—Cole Penning, Secretary

Pres. Perspective (cont.)

community not far from the “park.” On our way down we were stopped by a government military control and were told we needed an armed escort to continue but the escort was currently with another vehicle and would not return for a couple hours. We chose to not wait but continue on at our own risk. It turned out later that it was a wise decision. We entered the small village, met a couple well dressed men, asked about where we might find “Mister Bob”, found him, and went out to the area designated for the corridor and spent much of the day surveying, discussing the project, and of course, birding.

As the day drew late, we returned to the capital city of Maputo. I might mention that both going and coming we had seen a number of vehicles along the highway that had been attacked and burned over the previous weeks—carcasses of twisted metal, symbols of the war. That evening back at Dwight’s home, while sharing a simple supper, we watched the evening news. Suddenly, those same two men we had seen in the village earlier that day were being interviewed regarding an attack that had occurred along our same highway that day, the vehicle burned, all occupants killed. It appeared that the “military escort” was actually in cahoots with the guerillas, had signaled his buddies, the attack had taken place—and, we could thank God that we had chosen to not wait at the control point.

Bob Holbrook
President

Refreshments

Refreshment volunteers for the Oct 21st OCAS meeting:

Snacks: Jimmy Woodard, Nancy Scoggins, Pat McGaugh, and Sharon Henthorn

Ice & Drinks: Randy Henthorn