



photo by Tom Whipple

The Pileated Post

A National Audubon Society Chapter
Grove, OK

Grand Lake Audubon Society

Sept - Dec 2015

From the President's desk...

Welcome to a new Audubon season for the Grand Lake Audubon group!

The job description for the president of this group includes penning a letter for the cover of this newsletter. As the newly hatched president, I am flapping my wings, struggling to get off the ground. No birds will be harmed in this endeavor, especially since I am not using a quill pen,

In my opinion, field trips are probably the best-kept secret of our group. Our trips involve travel to nice outdoorsy places. This alone is sensational. But that is not all. I never cease to be amazed at the variety of birds that are spotted on these outings. I swear that some of our members have psychic abilities to locate and identify birds!

As for nature hikes, before I joined the Audubon Group, I had gone on a number of hikes involving plants and wildflowers. I enjoy all the hikes; both "flora" and "fauna." One key difference is that flora do not usually go flying off, precisely at the time you strive to take a closer look.

Another wonderful feature of our group is at every meeting we receive a splendid presentation by a guest who tells us about something of great interest, which could be anything from bats and caves to turkeys, Gila monsters, or a trek to the Galapagos.

I wish to start by asking some questions. Should this group look at any new goals for this coming "season?" For instance, should the group endeavor to increase membership? Should there be greater promotion and publicity of our meetings, or of our field trips? Et cetera.

I look forward to kicking around any ideas that anybody has. Feel free to push your ideas.
Erin

Upcoming Events

Sept 18 "Prothonotary Warbler Nest Success, Site Fidelity & Behavioral Ecology", Doug Wood, PhD, Professor of Biology, SE OK State University

Sep 26 Birding field trip to Grey Snow Eagle Rehab House; depart 6:30 am; F. Houck 918 787-6532

Oct 10, 11 Pelican Festival, Grove, OK; Willie Hale, 981 791-0296

Oct 12 "Oklahoma's Fantastic Red-tailed Hawks", Jim Lish, PhD, Associate Professor of Raptor Ecology, OSU

Nov 9 "The Beauties of Nature", Tom Whipple, Local Nature Photographer

Dec 14 "The Red-cockaded Woodpecker", Clay Barnes, Wildlife Biologist Technician, McCurtain County Wilderness Area

Hospitality Schedule

Sept 14 Willie Hale, Ellie Womack
Oct 12 Anne Whipple, JoAnn Walkup
Nov 9 Lyanna McKinney, Sandy Sullins

Wildcat Glades Water Festival

The 8th annual water festival at Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center was held on August 10th, 2015. Shoal Creek is main source of Joplin's water and much of Neosho's. This was a daylong event with educational booths, shoebox races and cardboard boat races along Shoal Creek, a raptor show including an owl with other

activities and food available. It is a free, relaxing family oriented event that is well worth attending. GLAS has provided an



Photos by Frank Houck

exhibit for this event the past three years. Frank Houck's blue bird houses were star attractions. Although the attendance was somewhat lower, they estimated that attendance was about 1500 people. ♦

Prothonotary warbler

Protonotaria citrea

The name "Prothonotary" originally referred to a group of official scribes in the Catholic Church who wore bright yellow hoods, as this bird appears to do. Prothonotary Warblers place their nests in low cavities such as old Downy Woodpecker holes. Bald cypress, willows, and sweet gum are regular trees used for nesting. The nesting cavities tend to be in trees located near or over standing water. These warblers sometimes use bird boxes, gourds, and cypress knees for nesting. This summer visitor to the



Photo by Sandy Sullins

editor's yard, found an empty wren house to use. Although it was originally misidentified, this pair of warblers worked very hard to raise their brood. Someone in the area is missing

August 10th, 2015 and the little warblers fledged on August 14th and 15th. Breeding populations use areas that are highly localized with extreme habitat specificity and are vulnerable to habitat destruction. Considered endangered in Canada. This species is on the 2014 State of the Birds Watch List, which lists species most in danger of extinction without significant conservation action. They are on the *Yellow Watch List* which designates this species as either range restricted (small range and population), or are more widespread but with troubling declines and high threats. You can help the Prothonotary warblers by putting up nest boxes close to their preferred water areas. Make sure there is an ample supply of moss growing at the site – the more the better. Prothonotaries generally do not occupy areas that have little or no moss in the immediate vicinity of the nest site. Moss is their essential nesting material. Our first speaker at the monthly meeting will fill in the rest of the Prothonotary warbler research study and nesting facts. ♦

Bird Tattoos

"Biggest week in American Birding", took place May 8-17th, 2015 in NW Ohio, also known as Warbler Capital of the World.

The Biggest Week is a 10-day festival that takes place in Oak Harbor, Ohio. It is scheduled around the migration of 37 warbler species that visit the region during mid-May. Among the 2,000 birders attending, you'll find several with tributes to passerines, owls, hummingbirds, and even vultures, bursting across their skin. The contest for best bird tattoo first kicked off three years ago when the festival's organizers felt like they had to spice things up and make birding more relatable. Bird tattoos were the perfect device. "This ain't your grandma's birding festival," says Kenn Kaufman, whose wife Kimberly runs the Biggest Week (like a boss, by the way). This year's first place winner for this contest was Lauren McCafferty from Toledo, Ohio.

"The inspiration struck as I was sitting in my dorm room, feeling pretty down about pharmacy school. Being a student was



Photo: Camilla Cerea/Audubon

tough. I would study, watch TV, and sleep. That was my depressing life. But on this one day I was looking out the window, and all of a sudden, I saw a Cedar Waxwing. That's when I knew that I should be anywhere but in pharmacy school. So I left and started studying biology instead." - *Lauren McCafferty (Toledo, Ohio)*

Look for for more photos and inspirations at the July 5th posting: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalAudubonSociety> . ♦

Christmas Bird Count

The 115th Christmas Bird Count Regional summaries were distributed by the National Audubon Society. Here are excerpts from that summary.

"The winter of 2014-2015 was a relatively mild one across the Great Plains. Although the December temperatures were seasonable (= cold) in the Dakotas, they were quite mild indeed in the southern reaches of the region. This followed some bitterly cold temperatures in the Dakotas in November, however, that may have depressed bird numbers and resulted in fewer odd species lingering into the mid-winter period in the northern Great Plains. Most importantly was the precipitation, or lack of it really, across the area."

"Nineteen counts were run, completed and submitted this past season in **Oklahoma**. Four counts passed the century mark this year with Tulsa tallying 106, Norman 107, Oklahoma City reporting 116, but Tishomingo N.W.R. taking the gold

medal with 117 species recorded on count day. A state-wide survey of some of the more interesting finds would necessarily include: Hulah Reservoir's Sedge Wrens (7 birds); Kenton's (Black Mesa) Western Screech-Owl, Juniper Titmouse, Winter/Pacific Wren, Sage Thrasher, Black-throated Sparrow, and Cassin's Finch; Oklahoma City's Lesser Black-backed Gull; Sooner Lake's Peregrine Falcon; Tishomingo's American Avocet, American Woodcock (3 individuals) and out-of-place Say's Phoebe and Sedge Wren; and Tulsa's Barrow's Goldeneye. Purple Finches were only reported from four counts (Broken Bow, Hulah, Oklahoma City, and Tishomingo) with a total of only nine individuals. "

The Christmas bird count is an important part of the continuing study of bird migrations. Please help us with our local count that is held in the Spavinaw area. More details will be available later. ♦

Har-Ber Village Ecology & Environment Day

"Noting the importance of the Turkey Vulture to the environment, this year was the 3rd year for this event & proudly the 3rd year Audubon participated. There were 31 children at our booth identifying pictures of birds displayed on cloth. Each child was given a wise owl sticker and activity bag



Willie's bird ID table - Photo by Sandy Sullins

filled with fun things to do. There are many wonderful changes at the village. Just driving into the area puts a smile on your face. Thank you to Carolyn Burr, Sandy Sullins, Ann Spragins, Kathy Bixler, Betsey Neel, Joanne Walkup, Tim Burr & David Hale for your help & support." -Coordinator Willie Hale ♦

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Hear Ye Hear Ye

Chapter only dues are now payable. If you have a National Audubon Society membership, the local chapter dues have already been paid with that membership. For local chapter only dues, mail your check for \$15 to GLAS; PO Box 451813; Grove, OK; 74345-1813 or bring it to the next monthly meeting. Thank you for your support of this chapter and Audubon Adventures.