



photo by Tom Whipple

# The Pileated Post

A National Audubon Society Chapter  
Grove, OK

Grand Lake Audubon Society

March - May, 2018

## Frankly Speaking...

### Greetings!

Christmas has come and gone and the CBC was another success. We counted 80 species and 6059 birds. There were three teams and Paul Wilson. The December meeting was held on a cold night with 11 members, and one guest present. As usual, the food was good. In January, Bob Livesay made a presentation on photography equipment. The Home & Garden show is rapidly approaching. They want \$250 for a space and to have a second space would cost another \$200. Expenses we would have a hard time recouping!

We have an upcoming trip to Oxley Nature Center, Tulsa, March 24; Spavinaw Creek, April 23; and a trip to a Birding Festival south of Fayetteville, May 5. Please keep these trips in mind if you want to see birds.

Our annual Eagle watch was held on January 20 with nine participants, four GLAS members and 5 guests. We saw 100+ eagles on the roost along Spavinaw Creek east of Gravette. It was a cool, damp and overcast morning. Our usual café was closed due to a power outage in the city of Gravette. No eagles were seen at the SWEPCO Plant at Gentry, but several shore birds were spotted working the shore line.

The bluebirds continue to feed on meal worms at our feeder. There has been a report of Trumpeter Swans on some of the little ponds near the Afton Turnpike interchanges.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their prayers concerning our daughter, Diane. She has been hospitalized at OSU Medical Center, Tulsa, almost two weeks now with strep pneumonia. I am now writing this from her bedside. Her health is much improved and we are waiting on doctors' approval for dismissal. ~~Frank

## Calendar of Events

**Feb 12** – Meeting, 7 p.m.; “Monarch Butterflies”, Val Frankoski, Wildcat Glades & Audubon Center, Joplin, Mo.

**March 12** – “Wildflowers – the good, the bad, the invasive”, Amy Buthod, Botanical Specialist at University of Oklahoma.

**March 24** – Oxley Nature Center; depart 7:30\*; bring sack lunch; S Sullins 918-786-2638.

**April 9** – “Notes from recent birding field trips”, Dr. Doug Wood, PhD, Ornithologist & Professor of Biological Science; SE Ok State University, Durant.

**April 23** – Spavinaw Creek; depart 8 a.m.\*; bring sack lunch; S. Sullins, 918-786-2638;

**May 5** – Birder Weekend-Arkansas; depart 5:45 a.m.; food available at event; Frank Houck, 918-787-6532.

**\*Tours leave Wal-Mart on time.**

## Ruby-crowned Kinglets

Ruby-crowned Kinglets are tiny, active, olive-green to gray songbirds. Their wings are dark, with two white wing-bars. There is a black smudge below the second wing-bar, which is a field mark useful in distinguishing a Ruby-crowned Kinglet from the similar-appearing Hutton's Vireo. Ruby-crowned Kinglets have bold, incomplete white eye-rings. Their legs are black and their feet, yellow. They are slightly larger than the closely related Golden-crowned Kinglet and lack that species' black and white head stripes. Male Ruby-crowned Kinglets have bright red crests (that can vary in color to orange), which can be raised when the bird is excited but which are more often completely hidden. Females look like males but lack the red crest.

Please read Sandy Sullins account on next page.



## Ruby-crowned Kinglet sighting

By Sandy Sullins

Several weeks ago I noticed a small bird at my suet cake feeder. It looked like it might be a warbler – small size, small pointed beak, quick flights. I finally lost hope in identification until at one visit, he nodded toward me. There it was, a small red area flashing at me from its head. Aha, I know who you are. You are a Ruby-crowned kinglet. The Sibley field guide confirmed my observations. Note the incomplete eye ring, white wing bar with wider black bar beneath, and the two toned legs. The upper leg is black and the feet are orange. This is a small bird that can be seen statewide from September 10<sup>th</sup> to May 15<sup>th</sup>. Watch out for this little bird at your suet feeder this winter!

## Bob Livesay presentation

Bob Livesay held the rapt attention of all those attending the January 8, 2018, meeting of GLAS. His presentation explaining cameras and bird photography was outstanding.

There is much to think about when taking photos and many new words, phrases we heard about, i.e., backgrounds, shutter speeds, depth of field, EOS, camouflage, and more.

Bob demonstrated with two cameras, one weighing one pound, the other weighing five pounds, the similarities of each, and the differences too. Comparing quality of photos, both cameras had capabilities of great photos. Comparison of prices gave food for thought, too.

One of the many tips he shared with the group was to focus on the eye of the bird when taking a shot.

A question and answer session followed, with lots more information discussed/learned during that time, too.

*February is the shortest month of the year with only 40,320 minutes!*

## Butterbiking with Butterflies

*Joplin Globe, Dec. 29, 2017*

After following the 10,000-mile migration of the monarch butterfly, biologist Sara Dykman, of Kansas City, Kansas, has now finished the multinational trip and is the first person to complete it.

The North American monarch is the only butterfly to make a two-way migration, which is portrayed to be “one of the most spectacular natural phenomena in the world”. Flying at speeds ranging from 12 to 25 mph, the monarchs travel through three countries – Canada, the United States and Mexico.

Sara followed multiple generations of monarchs on a bicycle made out of recycled parts and arrived at her destination in central Mexico in early December. Her thinking was, “I probably saw your great-great grandparents, and maybe I saw you when you were an egg”.

Each week, Dykman traveled approximately 300 miles or 60 miles per day. She rested inside of her tent or relied on the kindness of strangers to house her for the evening.

Her last day consisted of biking uphill on a steep cobblestone road, where she traveled at speeds of 2 mph.



Scientists say that the monarch’s decline in population could lead to extinction in the next few decades.

**Monarch** butterflies are known for the incredible mass migration that brings millions of them to California and Mexico each winter. North American monarchs are the only butterflies that make such a massive migration.

**Type:** Insect, **Diet:** Herbivore, **Average life span in the wild:** Up to 6 to 8 months, **Size:** Wingspan 3.7 to 4.1 in (9.4 to 10.5 cm), **Weight:** .0095 to .026 oz (.27 to .75 g)

## Red Slough Birding Convention

The dates for this year's Red Slough Birding Convention will be May 5 – 8. Our keynote speaker this year will be Greg Lasley ([www.greglasley.com](http://www.greglasley.com)). Greg is a wildlife photographer and naturalist from Texas. Greg will be giving a presentation on "Jaguars and More – a Brazilian Adventure" and another on the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Texas". Our other speaker will be Steven Hunter who spends most of his time photographing the natural wonders of Oklahoma and Arkansas. The title of his presentation will be "Blessed by the Light; Nature Photography". The convention also provides guided tours to the Red Slough WMA, the Little River NWR, and the McCurtain County Wilderness area. These tours provide the easiest way to see hard-to-find species in Oklahoma, such as King Rail, Least Bittern, Purple Gallinule, Swinson's Warbler and Red-cockaded Woodpecker. You may also get to see an American Alligator.

So check out our updated website at <http://www.redsloughconvention.com/> for more information and registration.

David Arbour,  
DeQueen, Arkansas

## Get to know your backyard bluebirds

**EASTERN:** Present year-round in eastern North America, this species extend north in summer, and in parts of southern Arizona. The male has a blue back and head, and a reddish-brown breast. The female is more subdued, with a gray-brown head.

**WESTERN:** These birds breed in the West and spend winter in various kinds of open woods. The male has deep blue on his back, head and throat, with a rusty red shoulder. The female has a light-colored head and pale rust breast.

**MOUNTAIN:** This species is found in western foothills and mountains. Many fly as far south as Mexico for the winter. The male is shades of blue, from dark blue to sky blue, practically all over. The female is gray with tinges.

~~*Birds & Bloom*, Feb/March 2018

Weather for the December 17, CBC was cool and cloudy. It made bird identification a challenge but the total species counted was 80 & 6,059 birds.

## Inside the Nest

**CUP:** Cup-shaped nests are the most common type found in backyards. Birds like American robins and blue jays build their cup nests on branches or ledges with twigs, grasses and sometimes man-made materials such as string, cloth and paper.

**PLATFORM:** Bald eagles and ospreys are among several species that construct their huge, somewhat flat nests on platforms and in trees. The birds interweave large sticks, moss and grass to create these nests. One pair of bald eagles will reuse the same nest, which can eventually weigh up to 2 tons, every year.

**HANGING:** Orioles like Bullock's, Baltimore and Altamira gather fibers, including twine and strings, to create gourd-shaped pouches hanging from branches. The female oriole works on the nest from the inside and forms the bottom to the shape of her body.

**CAVITY:** Instead of creating a traditional nest, woodpecker species like downies and hairies carve out a nest cavity within a tree. Males and females take turns using their bills to dig and then line the bottom of the 6 to 15-inch-deep cavity with soft woodchips.

*Birds & Blooms*, Feb/March 2018

## Sandhills in Action

The 48<sup>th</sup> annual Nebraska Crane Festival is March 22-25 in Kearney, Nebraska, and it features an impressive lineup of guided field trips, presentations from experts and more. Visit [ne.audubon.org](http://ne.audubon.org) for information.

1. Start your day bright and early (30 minutes before sunrise) at Fort Kearney State Recreation Area. Bridges over the Platte River offer one-of-a-kind views of sandhill cranes. You'll need a permit, so nab one at [outdoornebraska.gov](http://outdoornebraska.gov) or the visitor center.

2. Next, head east to Rowe Sanctuary for a two-hour sandhill crane tour. An experienced guide leads you through a trail of viewing blinds for optimal looks at roosting cranes. The tours run March 2-April 8 and cost \$35 per person.

3. Make time for the Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Ctr. in Wood River, Nebraska, where more than 200,000 sandhills have been spotted in one day.

## Mourning Doves

In 1822, French Ornithologist Charles Lucien Bonaparte and his wife, Zenaide, came to America so he could study new birds. He called a West Indies bird the zenaide dove; it became the name of the genus to which mourning doves belong. The common name comes from the bird's soft, sad-sounding coos and calls.

Each mourning dove brood consists of two eggs. Both parents incubate the eggs and feed the offspring. One pair may have up to six broods in a year.

Mourning doves belong to one of three families of birds that produce "milk," an antioxidant-rich liquid secreted in their throats, to feed their young. Both males and females produce the fluid.

Mourning doves are a popular game bird in North America – hunters kill approximately 20 million of them each year. The bird is also one of the most widespread species found in the United States, with a population of about 350 million.

Seeds are a huge staple in a mourning doves diet, accounting for 99 percent of what it eats. On the menu are grass and weed seeds, cracked corn, millet and sunflower seeds.

It takes two to four days for a pair to build a nest. The male finds and brings twigs to the female, and she does the bulk of the construction.

~~*Birds & Bloom*, Feb/March 2018



Photo by Jerry Acton

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