



photo by Tom Whipple

The Pileated Post

A National Audubon Society Chapter
Grove, OK

Grand Lake Audubon Society

March – May 2019

Frankly Speaking...

It is time for another missive from your President. The weather has been kind of rowdy this winter. Some days are cold and some days very warm, sometimes on consecutive days.

We have had some very good programs this year, thanks to Tom Whipple contacting people who are interesting and knowledgeable on their subjects. The big disappointment is the presenters travel to Grove and we have a very sparse crowd to partake of their knowledge. At the meeting held 11 February, there were 12 members and 4 guests. Three of the guests were family of the presenter. It must be discouraging to our presenters to look out at the audience and recognize that one-fourth of the crowd is people who came with you.

We are getting ready to appoint a Nominating Committee for officers for the coming year. Ken Spragins and I will be ineligible to continue, plus several have stated they wish to discontinue in their responsibilities. If you would like to see Grand Lake Audubon continue, please consider taking one of the positions offered to you, or even volunteer to serve. GLAS is responsible for the Pelican Festival ever having been formed.

We have had some good trips to distant places, plus we always look forward to some of the other activities we participate in.

When Evelyn and I joined 20 years ago, the average attendance was 40 or more. If we don't get the response we need, this organization will have to disband and our Charter returned to National Audubon Society. I would hate to see that happen!

Just remember, keep looking up for you never know what you might see!!!

~ ~ *Frank*

Calendar of Events

March 11 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Trinity Baptist Church, 4th & Main, “**The Eucjee Butterfly**”, Jane Breckenridge, director

March 23 – Oxley Nature Center, Tulsa; depart 7:30; bring sack lunch; Sandy Sullins, 918-786-2638*

April 8 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Trinity Baptist Church, 4th & Main; “**The Vulture**”, Mike Davis, Wildlife biologist

April 22 – Spavinaw Creek; depart 8:00 a.m., Sandy Sullins, 918-786-2638; sack lunch*

May 13 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Trinity Baptist Church, 4th & Main, “**Oklahoma Bats**”, Jena Donnell, OK Dept. of Wildlife

May 4 – Birder Weekend-Arkansas; depart 5:45 a.m.; food available at event; Frank Houck, 918-787-6532.

May 18 – GW Carver Park, depart 7:00 a.m.; John Beyer, 918-787-5188; bring sack lunch*
Meet at Wal-Mart parking lot, north of wildlife area behind Rib Crib. We leave on time, so don't be late.

True or False?

- A. Singing is left to male birds only. Females don't call out to prospective mates.
- B. Some fliers waltz to attract a mate with wing flapping, head dipping and performing intricate dances.
- C. A lovely dinner advances a bird romance. Certain species feed their potential partners.

(Answers on page 2)

April 11 – “Home School Days”

At Har-Ber Village

Audubon will participate with a booth 9 AM to 2 PM in the Harvey & Bernice building. The theme this year is “Ecology & Environment.”

Last year was the first year for this event with 600 parents and children attending. This year’s projected attendance is 400 to 500. I’m told home school families are always looking for things to be involved with. The professional speakers Tom Whipple has provided us with should be helpful to home school parents. It would be great to gain new Audubon members. Okay, down to business.

Your help is needed. I would like to compile a list of web sites pertaining to birds, Ecology & the Environment. Please send or call me with one you like. On display, there will be bird houses, feeders, with building instructions; bird nests & eggs; and some recycle ideas. Information on attracting birds to your yard, too.

Please add this date to your calendar and call me with your preferred time working at the booth, Thursday, April 11. I’m taking volunteers now. Willie Hale, 918-791-0926

Something to Consider

The Annual Picnic scheduled for June 10 this year is the perfect time to invite friends and family to share good food and fellowship with Grand Lake Audubon Society members. They can also be invited to our meetings.

All events/meetings/outings of GLAS are always free and open to the public, too!

HOSPITALITY RESPONSIBILITIES

March 11 – Evelyn Houck, Sandy Sullins

April 8 – Ann Whipple, Ellie Womack

May 13 – Diana Smith, *One Volunteer needed*

Please contact Diana Smith at 918-257-1593 to help fill the empty slots for this important role in after-meeting fellowship.

Nest Boxes to Know....

SONGBIRD HOUSE: Chickadees, titmice, bluebirds and wrens are the most common backyard cavity nesters. They take up residence in classic wood birdhouses, but they’re very particular about the size of the entrance hole. These songbirds are most likely to raise a family in a box if the hole is 1-1/8 to 1/1/2 inches in diameter.

PURPLE MARTIN HOUSE: Purple martins nest in colonies, so consider a six to 12-cavity house. Being a martin landlord takes some commitment, though. First set up the large multiunit house 12 to 18 feet above ground—and then keep the cavities clear of nonnative house sparrows!

WOODPECKER HOUSE: Entice woodpeckers with boxes attached to tree trunks, anywhere from 8 to 12 feet high. Add 4 inches of wood shavings to the floor—woodpeckers use it as nesting material. The preferred entrance hole size varies by species. Downies like 1-1/4 inches, flickers favor 2-1/2 inches.

SCREECH-OWL HOUSE: Hang a house for screech-owls to nest in the summer and roost in winter. They will use a box with a elliptical entrance hole 4 inches wide by three inches high. Watch them peek their heads out around dusk. Bonus! Wood ducks are attracted to the same type of birdhouse.

~ Feb-March 2019, *Birds & Bloom*

Change is hard. Have you ever tried to bend a coin?

True False Answers (from page 1)

- A. FALSE; In some species, females sing back.
- B. TRUE.
- C. TRUE

Meet the Wilsons....

Five North American birds—warbler, snipe, plover, storm-petrel and phalarope—are named after renowned ornithologist Alexander Wilson. When he first sketched and spotted the Wilson's warbler more than 200 years ago, he called it a green black-capt flycatcher.

Anyone living in the Lower 48 has a shot at seeing a Wilson's warbler during spring and fall migration – they pass through every state in the contiguous U.S.

Despite its stocky build and long, awkward bill, a Wilson's snipe flies more than 60 mph. Receptors in that lengthy bill help the bird find food that is lurking underground.



The Wilson's plover is just one of 11 plovers regularly found in North America. Its best and most distinguishing field mark is an oversized bill.



There are approximately 30 million Wilson's storm-petrels in the world. The best place in the U.S. to spot these seabirds is off the Atlantic coast during the summer months.

More than 80,000 Wilson's phalaropes gather on California's Mono Lake for four to six weeks before their nonstop 3,000-mile trek to South America. While at the lake, they molt and double their body weight.

~~Feb-March 2019, *Birds & Bloom*

Waiting out Winter

Punxsutawney Phil is famous for emerging from his Pennsylvania den every Feb. 2, but many groundhogs, especially females, stay put until March when warmer weather moves in.

Each autumn, some chipmunks' species hoard food in underground burrows where they spend the winters. These small squirrel-like animals create tunnels as long as 10 feet.

The common poorwill, a type of nightjar, enters a state of rest for days or weeks at a time. Scientists first discovered this behavior in the 1940s. It's one of the few birds known to hibernate.

Eagle Trip, 1-26-2019

Skies were clear and the temperature was 19 degrees, when the Eagle trip began from Grove over into Arkansas on January 26. As the group reached the roost area for the eagles and to see them depart, the temperature was 16 degrees! It was decided that the eagles were still snug in their roost locations as only 12 eagles were spotted way back in the trees. The total for the day was a big disappointment with 30 birds counted. The sun was shining and the new fallen snow covering the grassy areas, and some of the roads less travelled, made for beautiful landscape to enjoy.

Eighteen other species of birds were identified during the morning, including Fox Sparrow and Bobwhite Quail.

Breakfast in Gravette was yummy and enjoyed by the seven in attendance.



John Greenwood, guest; Sandy Sullins, Eve & Lonnie Schnakenberg, Frank Houck, Doc Simmer, guest.
photo by Evelyn Houck

Interesting facts about Beavers:

They are Canada's national animal.

They can hold their breath up to 15 minutes during a dive.

Their dams create wetland habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

They have ear and nose valves that shut to keep out water when submerged.

Their lips close behind their teeth, allowing the beaver to swim with building materials and food without drowning.

~~Outdoor Oklahoma, Jan.-Feb. 2019

Meeting Notes...

Mike Davis, Wildlife Biologist, presented an interesting and informative program, "Introduction of Condor" on January 14, 2019.

Condors are members of the New World Vulture species. They have no DNA like the Old World Vulture species. They do not build stick nests, are not colony nesters, have no vocal cords so cannot caw. Turkey Vulture wingspan is six feet, Condor wingspan is 9-1/2' and heavier than the Turkey Vulture.

Condors have clean heads so bacteria from their food doesn't stick to their feathers. They use thermals for soaring and can cover 160 miles looking for food.

They are prehistoric, 42,000 years with oldest fossils found in New York, Florida, Texas, and California. Original food sources included oxen, ground sloth, camels, horses, and bison. Current sources: cattle, goats, sheep.

NOTE: Mike will present the program on April 8, "The Vulture", which should be equally interesting.

(Continued on next column.)

Brandon Brown, Biologist, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, was the speaker for the February 11 meeting. His program was both informative and entertaining as he told us about stoneroller fish, their gobbling algae from shallow, stream water, and that the stoneroller is favorite food of bass. He also shared about an interesting film, yet to be released, that he was involved in that was filmed right in our backyard about the stoneroller and their participation in the ecology.

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KEEPING TRACK – John James Audubon tied a string on the leg of an eastern phoebe, making it the first North American Bird to be banded.

KNOCK, KNOCK – Woodpeckers have a special bone in their skulls that wraps around their brain. It works like a seat belt, protecting their tiny brains from damage.

HOME SECURITY – Breeding pairs of pileated woodpeckers stay and defend their territory all year long, allowing newcomers only in winter.

~~Birds & Blooms Extra!, March 2019

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