



photo by Tom Whipple

The Pileated Post

A National Audubon Society Chapter
Grove, OK

Grand Lake Audubon Society

Sept – Nov 2014

From the President's desk...

It has been a wonderful summer. As of this writing we have only had three triple digit temperature days. The forecast is for several more this week. On August 9th we participated in two different events. There was the "Ecology and Environment Day" at Har-ber Village here in Grove and "Water Quality Days" at Wildcat Glades in Joplin. Willie Hale, Sharon Herhager, Carolyn Burr, Kathy Bixler and Carole Chalupnik manned the booth and had a very good turnout. Sandra Sullins, Harley Roberts and Frank Houck manned the booth at Wildcat Glades. In the middle of the afternoon during the boat races the wind came up, the lightning started and we got rained out. We saw and visited with several people. One person who does our eagle watch came by and said hello. We had several people showing an interest in the Pelican Festival. We had a coordinator for the Pelican Festival, but he has since removed himself from that post due to extenuating circumstances. He is going to be out of town. If you can think of anyone who would like to do that please contact Sandra Sullins or myself. The upcoming year sounds as if we will have some great programs and outings. During July Evelyn and I saw a pair of Mississippi Kites soaring over our house. I am sure there have been other sightings of birds not usually seen in our area of the state. We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the September meeting on **08 September at 7:00 p.m.** at the Presbyterian Church. Remember keep looking up because you never know who or what you might see.

Frank

Upcoming Events

Sept 8 Monthly meeting; "Bald Eagles and Water Quality at Grand Lake" Stephen Nikolai, GRDA

Sept 26-27 Pelican Festival, Civic Center, Grove, OK

Oct 13 Monthly meeting; "Birds of Antarctic and More", Doug Henderson, photographer

Oct 18 Owl watch, Alan Smith residence; carpool from WalMart parking lot 5:15 pm

Nov 10 Monthly meeting; "Birds and Mammals of South Africa", Rod & Ellen Salee, Ozark Gateway Audubon Society

Nov TBA - Lake Eucha

Hospitality Schedule

September 8 Sharon Witt & Vincent Witt
 October 13 Kathy Bixler & Judith Deneen
 November 1 Carolyn Burr & Sandy Sullins

Coordinator - Willie Hale 918-791-0926

Har-ber Village Ecology and Environment Day

The turkey Vulture was the bird of topic showing his importance to the environment. It was a good day with an increase in attendance and interest in Audubon over last year. Many thanks to Sharon Herhager,

Carolyn Burr, Carole Chalupnik and Kathy Bixler for working our booth. ♦

Coordinator - Willie Hale

Mississippi Kites

On July 15 of this year, the Houck family spotted a pair of Mississippi kites flying over their area. The Date guide to the occurrences of Birds in Oklahoma, states that they are only found as far East in Oklahoma as Nowata county. They have also been seen in the Hickory Grove area of Delaware County for several years. They are more likely to be seen in SW Missouri than in NE OK. The Baumgartner's described this bird in their Oklahoma Bird Life, as one of the smaller hawks with infinite grace and beauty. They describe it as having a conspicuously white head with a fan-shaped velvet black tail. They are a small pointed-winged kite that looks more like a falcon than any of the other kites we might see. The adult peregrine falcon is larger, but shows a similar silhouette in flight. The



Mississippi Kite Adult

© Lindell Dillon, Lake Thunderbird, Oklahoma, August 2011

facial moustache mark and more powerful flight are diagnostic of the Mississippi Kite. They soar on flat wings, often high up in the air on thermals. They can be seen catching insects in flight. They are 14.5 inches in length and have a wingspan of 35 inches. Their breeding range is from the Central plains, Gulf coast and up the Atlantic



Mississippi Kite Juvenile

© Greg Page, Addick's Reservoir, Houston, Texas, August 2012

coast into the Carolinas. There are isolated breeding colonies in New Mexico and Arizona. They build a stick nest high in the trees in a colony of up to twenty pairs. According to National Geographic book, Complete Birds of North America, 2006, the breeding range is expanding. Most migrate in August to early September with stragglers into October and spend winters well down in South America. They are often seen in large groups through coastal Texas. They return to breeding grounds in late March into early April. Some people consider these birds as pests since they can attack you. Visit <http://oklahomabirdsandbutterflies.com/cat/3/20> for anecdotes about the pros and cons of having these birds in your area. Also interesting is the formation of an Americana band named Mississippi Kites that was formed in Columbia, South Carolina in 2012. This groove based band is deeply steeped in early rock and roll, blues and archetypal country music. ♦

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT DEADLY WINDOW STRIKES?

It happens all the time. A dull thud at the window, a few feathers clinging to the glass, and a bird lies stricken on the ground below. If you're lucky, the bird revives in a few minutes and carries on with its life. But far more often it dies right there, joining an estimated 365 million to a billion birds killed each year by window collisions in the United States alone. (An estimated 25 million birds

die annually from window collisions in Canada.)

The latest U. S. numbers come from **Scott Loss of Oklahoma State University**. He and collaborators at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service just published a two-year study in *The Condor: Ornithological Applications* in which he calculated the overall death rate from window strikes. Based on the data, Loss believes the total could be as high as 1.3 billion birds killed each year.

An average single-family residence is estimated to kill one to three birds each year, but when you multiply that figure by the huge number of homes in this country, Loss says a midrange estimate of 253 million bird deaths can be attributed to houses after controlling for the abundance of a species in a given location, Loss found six that seemed to strike windows more often than would be expected by chance at every building type: the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Brown Creeper, Ovenbird, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Gray Catbird, and Black-and-white Warbler.

Finding what works to save birds is Daniel Klem, Jr.'s, life's work. The Muhlenberg College professor has been studying bird-window collisions for 40 years. Two properties of glass make it lethal for birds. Glass can appear completely transparent. Glass walkways between buildings are especially deadly because birds spot greenery on the other side and try to fly straight through. Glass can also be a mirror, reflecting the sky and surrounding vegetation, creating the illusion that the habitat continues.

Research by Klem in 1979 and in 1990 produced the so-called "2 x 4" rule governing how patterns may best be applied to glass to deter bird collisions. He found that most birds will avoid windows with a pattern of vertical stripes spaced four inches apart, or horizontal stripes spaced two inches apart and placed on the *outside* of the glass. Inside patterns can be completely obscured by

strong reflections on the outside surface of the window

Studies have shown that homes with feeders can have more bird deaths from window strikes, so it's vital to place feeders a foot or less away from windows, which will lessen the chance that the birds will gain enough speed to be killed or injured if they do hit the glass. Even then it is important to reduce reflections, because birds may fly from longer distances to feeder reflections and gain enough momentum to cause serious harm or death.

Use the "2 x 4 rule" to apply decals, paint, hanging strings, soap, or tape, such as ABC's Bird Tape: vertical rows placed four inches apart or horizontal rows placed two inches apart. Decals don't have to reflect UV light because it's the pattern and spacing that matters. Shape is also irrelevant.

"If you go the tempera paint route, you can make it a fun, family activity," ABC's Christine Sheppard suggests. "Paint the windows for the next holiday—hearts on Valentine's Day, turkeys at Thanksgiving, witches on Halloween." Even doing this only during migrations will save some birds. Fine netting placed over windows is also effective, as are regular window screens.

The U. S. General Services Administration (GSA) is required to use sustainable design in new federal buildings. Sheppard says the GSA is now incorporating bird-friendly features in its building guidelines, which are currently being revised. "Green" building guidelines with bird-friendly provisions (some voluntary, some mandatory) have been adopted in San Francisco, Oakland, Portland (Oregon), Toronto, and the State of Minnesota. ♦

Pat Leonard, Living Bird Magazine, Winter 2014

Wildcat Glades

For the newest edition of the Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center newsletter, visit:

http://www.wildcatglades.audubon.org/connecti ons_v8no1.pdf

Grand Lake Audubon Society
PO Box 451813
Grove OK 74345-1813

Hear Ye Hear Ye

Chapter Only dues are now due. If you have a National Audubon Society membership, the local chapter dues have already been paid. For local chapter only dues, mail in your check for \$15 or bring it to the next monthly meeting on Monday, September 8th.

Thank you