



The Pileated Post

A National Audubon Society Chapter

photo by Tom Whipple

Grand Lake Audubon Society

June-August 2020

From the President's desk..

So we had a tremendous year this year. Unbelievable. Really tremendous! NOT!

We are at the end of the year even though the year, as we knew it, ended some time ago!

This has been the strangest of times. A germ has seized our lives and no one is certain whether we will ever see "normal" again. I can't really remember the last time our group had a meeting or an outing. Was our last meeting on March 9?

Can we just assume that next September will arrive, that the great pandemic will be history, and we will all get to act like nothing out of the ordinary every happened?

Maybe we will be able to make up for lost time next year, by having an extraordinarily exciting, event-filled year! In the meantime, the birds have been pretending that they don't know anything about CoVID-19, social distancing, quarantining, or donning personal protective equipment.

The National Audubon Society still has "one of the best and most trusted field guides for North American birds" with over 800 birds of North America. It is free for the taking at the Audubon website in the internet. Also, the Audubon Magazine and lots of other news and information is available for free at their website as well.

By now, we were supposed to have reviewed the status of our officers and directors, selected new ones as applicable, reviewed memberships on our committees, and planned programs for the coming year. We will just have to improvise some way.

Late breaking news: We will have our picnic in June this year, brown bag style! For the picnic, we will conduct ourselves in as hygienically safe a manner as possible. In other words, everybody will bring their own food and beverages, along with their own chairs to sit on, and we will strive to maintain "social distancing" as well. Normally, at our annual picnic we install new officers and directors and arrange for other business. We will not be able to do so this year; but perhaps we will get a chance to do a little brainstorming about how we can start anew next September? Hope to see you at the picnic. If not, I will see you this coming September.

~~Erin

Calendar of Events

Our calendar and newsletter look rather sparse during this time period! But September will be here before we know it and we look forward to another year with activities and meetings of Grand Lake Audubon Society.

June 8, 6 p.m. – Annual Picnic – Bring your sack lunch, beverage and a chair to Wolf Creek Park for an evening of birding and chatting! Directions to Wolf Creek Park: From Grove, go north on Hwy 59 to 16th Street (first right beyond Leisure Road); coming from the north on Hwy 59, go past Dollar General and turn left at the second street going left, before stop light)

Sept. 14 – 7 p.m., meeting at First United Methodist Church Parlor. More details of this meeting and beyond in the next issue of the Pileated Post.

REMEMBER to check the GLAS web site for information and schedule changes that may occur from time to time.

www.grandlakeaudubonsociety.com

Our Sympathies....

Becky Townsley, 94, passed away April 24, 2020, in Tulsa. While Becky lived in Miami, she was an active member of GLAS. Our sympathies are extended to her family and friends.

Pensacola Dam Eagle Nest

The Eagle's nest is located in the off-roading area below the Pensacola Dam spillway. Grand River Dam Authority has announced that the buffer zone, established around the nesting area earlier this year, will remain closed to the public for an undetermined amount of time. GRDA will be able to reopen the area once all nesting activity has ceased for the year.

In January, the discovery of the nest prompted GRDA to close access to the area, per guidelines established by the United States Fish & Wildlife Services. Those guidelines recommend closing access around nests to allow for a buffer zone of 330 to 660 feet between the nest and public access, depending on exact locations and topography.

GRDA has also installed signage in the area along trails that head toward the nest, advising the public of the nest and that disturbing it is a violation of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, which could result in a criminal fine of \$100,000.

Currently the nesting pair of adult Bald Eagles have been successful in raising one young eagle this season, thanks in part to the public giving them plenty of room in an otherwise high traffic area. GRDA Biologists have noted that the eaglet, dubbed "Aeric", has been stretching and pumping its wings; building strength for its first flight. Given the success of the nesting pair in this location, the GRDA Ecosystems Department expects this couple will return next year, similar to the behavior of other nests in the area.

GRDA asks for the public's continued cooperation while the nest is still active.

~~The Grand Laker, May 7, 2020

Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Adult male has rosy triangle on chest, black head, big white spots in wings, heavy beak; Female and young are dark brown above, striped below, strong face pattern.

(These Grosbeaks may be found in northeast Oklahoma from April 24-May 24, and Sept. 17-Oct 7. ~~ 7th Edition of *Oklahoma Date Guide*)

Incubation of Eggs

The weather affects the length of the Hummingbird incubation period. If it's warm and food is easy to find, the female spends more time on the eggs and they may hatch in as little as 12 days. If it's cold and wet or if the female has to take longer feeding trips, extending the time she's away from her eggs, they may take up to 19 days to hatch. But the tenacious mother hummingbird keeps on incubating, no matter how long it takes~~*Birds & Bloom*, June-July '20

Spring Bird Reports

Ellie Womack reported Rose Breasted Grosbeaks; Sandy Sullins has had Orchard Orioles, Carolina wren, Blue birds and a first spring Summer Tanager; Eve Schnakenberg in Miami reported a pair of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, White-crowned Sparrow, Indigo Bunting; Carolyn Saunders, also in Miami, reported Indigo Bunting and Baltimore Oriole; Patsy Hagen has had 6 male and 4 female Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Orchard and Baltimore Orioles, Brown Thrashers, Yellow Warblers; and from Houck's yard many Baltimore Orioles, pair of Orchard Orioles, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Goldfinches, Bluebird pair that has fledged six babies and has a second hatch of 5 babies! And Willie Hale has noticed larger numbers of Scissor-tailed Fly Catchers this season.

The unusual report from Donna Dillman was a Baltimore Oriole landing and staying on her head as she filled the jelly feeder! Making sure it got the first bite?

Attractions for Birds, Butterflies and Bees

Top options for a wildlife-friendly garden includes Cosmos, Black-eyed Susan, Agastache, Coneflower, Bee Balm, Blazing Star, Verbena, Zinnia. ~~*Birds & Bloom*, June-July 2020



Great idea for feeding Orange halves, don't you think?
~~Facebook

Baltimore/Orchard Orioles



Baltimore Oriole

Baltimore Orioles are probably the most common member of the species, but they are often mistaken for Bullock's Orioles. The nest is very similar to the Orchard Orioles and they can often be seen nesting in the same trees. They lay between 3 to 7 eggs which hatch after 12-14 days. Both male and female birds then feed the young until they leave the nest around 2 weeks after they hatch. Baltimore Orioles feed on insects which they find by foraging high in trees and they love caterpillar moths. They also love fruit and will eat it from trees or bushes. If there is an oriole feeder in your garden, there's a good chance they will come to feed off the nectar.



Female Orchard Oriole

These orioles have one of the shortest breeding seasons. They begin the journey north in mid-late spring, with their return journey starting as early as mid-July. They often travel in flocks. The female will make a nest in open woodlands and often

shares the same trees with other orioles and birds. The nest hangs underneath the branch like a little pouch, and will hold between 4 – 6 eggs. The mother sits on the nest for 12-15 days, and they will leave the nest between 10-14 days after they have hatched. Once the babies have hatched, the father helps with the feeding, and a pair of orioles will only produce one brood per year.

Orchard Orioles love feeders and also visit gardens which are rich in fruits and nectar. In woodlands, they drink nectar from flowers in the fields and eat berries from bushes and trees. They also forage in the trees to find insects, including wasps, spiders and grasshoppers.

Male Orchard Oriole



Dangerous Spiders

By Justin Veach, Education Intern, OWLD

Two species of spiders in Oklahoma are potentially life-threatening for people; the brown recluse, also called fiddle back, and the black widow.

The brown recluse is a small brown spider that gets its nickname from the violin-shape marking located directly behind its eyes. The black widow is a slightly larger, black spider that is often distinguished by a red hourglass shape on the female's abdomen.

Brown recluse spiders usually live up to two years. Each female creates several egg sacs during the summer, each containing about 50 eggs. The brown recluse is able to survive up to six months without food or water. They aren't aggressive and won't bite unless provoked or cornered. Most brown recluse bites are minor, but some do cause health problems. The venom is more potent than that of most venomous snakes, but the spider doesn't normally inject enough venom to threaten a person's life.

Black widows get their name from their cannibalistic mating process. After mating, the female will sometimes bite the male and consume him if she's hungry. The male is much smaller than the female and is usually a dark brown color, not black.

The female black widow can bite and inject venom into a person, while the males and adolescents are fairly harmless. The venom is a neurotoxin that affects a person's nervous system. The venom is thought to be 15 times stronger than a rattlesnake's, but they don't inject very much and most people recover.

Black widows usually mate in springtime, and females can create several egg sacs during summer, each containing hundreds of eggs.

~~Outdoor Oklahoma, M/J 2020

