Bird Friendly Yards
Program Expands to 97 Certified Yards
Throughout Arkansas

By PAM and JACK STEWART
AAS Members

Ninety-seven Arkansas Audubon Bird Friendly Yards! Who will be the hundredth?! Twenty-three Arkansas counties are represented. Some yards are measured in square feet, some measured in acres. Plus, there is an Arkansas certified BFY in the state of Ohio, one in Missouri, and one in Florida! The idea is spreading, good news for the birds.

A recent Gold level participant is Eco Modern Flats, a multifamily community in Fayetteville. The grounds are landscaped with natives including a patch of tall prairie, recycle bins are prominently labeled and used, the buildings are LEED Platinum, Energy Star certified. There is even a roof-top garden. Residents there will be receiving information about the BFY status and what it means. We hope that other apartment complexes will be envious and follow Specialized Real Estate’s example.

People ask, “can one yard make a difference?” With 100 Bird Friendly Yards in Arkansas and judging from questions received by the BFY committee many more than that in progress, we can see that one yard connected to another with all connected to local ecosystems can make a real difference for the birds.

We are pleased to announce that Arkansas Audubon Society received a $500 donation for support of the Bird Friendly Yard project from the Greater Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs, at the recommendation of the Gardenia Garden Club.

Send questions concerning plants or birds to bfaudubon@gmail.com.

Recently certified participants in the program:

David & Teresa Luneau
Ann Smedley
Carson & Barb Miller
Eco Modern Flats
Kitty Sanders
Judy Griffith, Ninestones Land Trust
Janet Nye

Pulaski Co.
Hot Springs Co.
State of Ohio
Washington Co.
Washington Co.
Pulaski Co.
Newsletter and Membership Information

The Arkansas Audubon Society Newsletter is a quarterly publication of Arkansas Audubon Society, Inc., a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization, 472 Rock Creek Rd., Hot Springs, AR 71913-9261. Issue dates are March, June, September, and December.

PLEASE NOTE: Announcements, articles, information, and/or photographs to be considered for an upcoming edition of Arkansas Birds should be submitted to the editor no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication.

The newsletter is provided to those who pay membership dues to AAS.

Send newsletter submissions to MonroeAA@hendrix.edu.

Membership renewals are due Jan. 1 of each calendar year.

Please enter my membership in the Arkansas Audubon Society as a:

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*New Memberships paid in the last quarter (Oct. - Dec.) will include full membership for the following calendar year.

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS

Life Member of Arkansas Audubon Society (may be paid over a two-year period) $250.00
Patron of Arkansas Audubon Society $500.00

Draw check to Arkansas Audubon Society and send to: Wayne Lynch, Treasurer, P.O. Box 2426, Hot Springs, AR 71914

Swainson’s Hawk (Buteo swainsoni)
Photo courtesy of Tom Koerner/USFWS
Very rare in winter, an adult **Cinnamon Teal** south of Morrilton 9–10 Mar was a first for **Conway** (Ron Duvall).

A **White-winged Dove** was photographed in North Little Rock, **Pulaski** 5 Apr (Gwen Wiggins). This species is quite rare away from the Ft. Smith area.

Very rare in spring, a single **Whimbrel** was photographed at Saul’s Fish Farms, **Prairie** 20 Apr (Michael Linz, Randy Robinson) while an impressive nine photographed 28 May were a first for **Desha** (Dick Baxter).

Just the ninth for the state, a **Long-billed Curlew** was discovered south of Blackwell, **Conway** 21 Apr (RD).

Rare in spring, a **Marbled Godwit** was discovered at Saul’s Fish Farms, **Prairie** 19 Apr (Kenny & LaDonna Nichols); observers searching for this species found a **Hudsonian Godwit** at this same location the next day (ML, RRo).

Just the second occurrence for the Ozarks, a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was discovered at Beaver Lake, **Benton** 2 Apr (Joe Neal, Joan Reynolds).

Rare and almost annual, a **Pacific Loon** was photographed on Lake Maumelle, **Pulaski** 21 Mar (Tammy Wortham, Sheena Hare).

An **Anhinga** photographed at the Nature Conservancy’s King’s River Preserve, **Carroll** 29 Apr (Rose Ann Barnhill) was just the second for the Ozarks.

Very rare but annual, two **Glossy Ibis** were discovered in a flock of 110 **White-faced Ibis** at Overflow N.W.R, **Ashley** 14 Apr (Rhonda & Danny Townsend, Stacey Benson).

There were three **Swainson’s Hawk** reports for the season: 2 at Rick Evans Grandview Prairie, **Hempstead** 4 Apr (Candace Ware); 3 south of Dardanelle, **Yell** 14 Apr; and 8 south of Blackwell 20 Apr were a first for **Conway** (both K&LN).

A very late **Brown Creeper** was spotted in Searcy, **White** 2 May (Michael Nicodemus).

A **Hermit Thrush** photographed in Fayetteville, **Washington** 11 May (Jerry Byler) was late by nearly two weeks.

A **Sage Thrasher** photographed at Scatter Creek WMA, **Green** 22 May was just the third for the state (Tim Jones, Rhett Raibley).

Of the five **Red Crossbill** reports for the season, most interesting was a flock of 11 birds at Hobbs State Park, **Benton** 21 May. That recording analysis later revealed birds of Call Type 2, 4 and 5 (JN, Pooja Panwar).
Rare but annual, there were three Spotted Towhee reports: single birds at Cabot, Lonoke 26 Mar (Karen Hammond, Magaret Morgan); near Lake Hinkle, Scott 24 Mar (Ted Drozdowski); and Wapanocca N.W.R, Crittenden 20 Apr (BH).

Yellow-headed Blackbird is a very uncommon to rare spring migrant. Five counted south of Blackwell 20 Apr were a first for Conway; two were noted south of Dardanelle, Yell 25 Apr (both K&LN); and a single at Camp Nine, Desha 14 May was remarkable so far east (DB).

Very rare in any season, a female Black-throated Blue Warbler was at Hobbs State Park, Benton 27 Apr (Lynn Christie).

Black-throated Blue Warbler (Setophaga caerulescens)
Photo courtesy of Charles J Sharp

Member News: Adventures – in the name of birds – from around the world!

By DOTTIE BOYLES
News of Members Editor

Mitchell Pruitt has been quite busy the past few months. On November 3, 2018, he married Andrea Bollinger in Lamar, AR, overlooking the river valley. They honeymooned on Maui and Mitchell says, “Yes, we did take some time to check out the native and non-native birds.”

Mitchell successfully defended his master’s thesis in front of a crowd on November 27th and graduated from the University of Fayetteville on December 15th.

After looking into several programs, Mitchell accepted a fellowship offer and Ph.D. position at the U of A. working under the direction of Dr. J. D. Willson, in collaboration with Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, to study dispersal movements of North American owls. The goal will be to employ the use of satellite transmitters, possibly coupled with stable isotope analysis and more, to assess different dispersal strategies in owls and how those strategies play into survival. Mitchell states, “I’m looking forward to this journey and continuing to fill knowledge gaps in movement trends of an understudied family of birds.” The Arkansas Saw-whet Owl Project will live on, though not as his academic research.

In early November, Karen Holliday headed to South America and spent two weeks birding the central and southern areas of Chile with a diverse group of birders from the U.S., Denmark, and New Zealand. The first week was spent birding the Santiago and Temuco areas of the Central Andes Mountain Range, the Nothofagus forest, and the Valparaiso marshes and coastline, including a pelagic trip. The second week was spent at the very southern tip of the country in the Patagonian Steppes and Terra del Fuego. Trip highlights were Torrent Ducks, the Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, the very rare Patagonian Tinamou, three species of penguins-Humboldt, Magellanic, and King Penguins, and...
Chile’s spectacular landscapes. The group saw close to 230 species, with 145 species life birds for Karen.

Plate 1: Courting King Penguins (Aptenodytes patagonicus)

Photo courtesy of MMessina1245

Michael Linz and Patty McLean recently traveled to Georgia to finalize some issues with her house that’s on the market and to do some fine birding in the southeastern United States. After some heavy rains, they set out to look for some of the rarities reported in Middle and South Georgia. Rarities that should also be somewhere in Arkansas in the winter but haven’t been reported recently. This includes Bullock’s Oriole (which they missed), Limpkin, Say’s Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher and a BURROWING OWL (affectionately named Charlie by the landowner). A note of interest on this Burrowing Owl: This marks the third winter Charlie has shown up on this environmentally protective landowner’s farm, which prompted him to build a burrow system for his special visitor, a system that Charlie has taken to wholeheartedly. Information and photos of the owl were sent to David Johnson, an owl expert, who believes Charlie is a female based on the late date “she” tends to stay at this location (until late April or early May). Of course, the landowner hopes Charlie will attract a mate to this burrow and more magic will happen. Visitors who are willing to respect the landowner’s protocols are welcome to stop by and see the owl. Some of Michael and Patty’s other sightings included Grasshopper Sparrow, dozens of Palm Warblers (mostly Yellow), Common Ground-Dove, American Black Duck, Vermillion Flycatcher, Red-breasted Nuthatch (yes, they’re everywhere this winter), Sandhill Crane and Barn Owl (two roosting in a silo). For Michael and Patty, there’s nothing quite like birding agricultural fields and open pasture lands in the winter.

While it was certainly a fun adventure, they’re eager to get back to do some Arkansas birding, starting with a climb to the top of Pinnacle Mountain to see the recently reported Rock Wren.

David Oakley shared, “Due to popular demand, Dr. Ragupathy Kannan led a second trip to Ecuador this past December, this time to some southwest provinces that we missed during the March adventure. The group included Kannan, Carolyn Minson, Ann Gordon, Steve Davis, Mary Lane, Allan Mueller, Jerry and Barbara Davis, Bruce and Patricia Dale, Michael Linz, Patty McLean, and myself.

We arrived and departed Guayaquil, and then spent six wonderful days visiting Churute Mangroves, Yunguilla, Jorupe, and Buenaventura Reserves. The lodges were great, as always! We all added many life birds to our lists, and I think the best birds, at least for me, were the Pale-headed Brushfinch, the El Oro Parakeet, and the Long-wattled Umbellabird. Anyone that has never been on a Kannan led trip needs to sign up for the next one!

The birding community would like to express their sympathy to following AAS members for the loss of their loved ones. Barry Haas and Susan Hardin, on the passing of Barry’s mom Margaret Haas, age 93, November 11; Karen and Ray Holliday, on the passing of Karen’s dad John Paul Jones, age 94, December 16; and Elizabeth Adam, on the passing of Dr. Doug James, age 93, December 17.
Halberg Ecology Camp

By BARRY HAAS
Ecology Camp Treasurer

The partial federal government shutdown in December and January cast a far wider net than you might imagine. Because the U.S. Forest Service was impacted, we did not receive the form to reserve Camp Clearfork for the Halberg Ecology Camp until later than normal. That delayed when we will get confirmation of our requested dates and can begin posting on the website camp related items like the 2019 application form. By the time you read this hopefully the confirmed dates and application forms will be available on the website. That should take place in late February or early March.

As you know from past Halberg Ecology Camp articles, we have capacity for 50 first-year campers each of two sessions in June. We have a hard time filling all 100 spots, what I call opportunities. Those 100 opportunities allow those current 5th and 6th grade students to explore the complex world of nature. You can help by keeping your eyes open to youth that age who love nature and making them and their families aware of this exceptional hands-on learning opportunity.

Regular tuition for the Halberg Ecology Camp is $350, but due to the generosity of numerous supportive organizations and individuals we always have a number of scholarships and tuition assistance that the camp's executive director, Tamzen Tumlison, matches with applicants whose families have shown a need. We have always ensured this learning opportunity is available to all youth who have shown a special interest in nature.

Our once-a-year Fall Appeal generated $10,050 in donations. Of that total $4,025 came from known parents and grandparents of campers, present or former, and the remaining $6,025 came from Arkansas Audubon Society members and others. Funding to hold our three youth camps including the one-week Advanced Camp for third-year campers is expensive due to the intensity. For example, two instructors work together as a team with a class of 8-10 youth at the Halberg Ecology Camp. That intensity is one reason the camps are so impactful in a relatively short period of time.

It's always the right time to support the youth ecology camps financially. Checks should be made payable "AAS Halberg Ecology Camp" or "Arkansas Audubon Society", and mailed to P.O. Box 242088, Little Rock, AR 72223. All donations are tax deductible and acknowledged by letter or e-mail (e-mail when possible to save on postage expense).

New Arkansas Audubon Society Members
Rhianna Corker, Warren
Alisa Dixon, North Little Rock

Donations to General Fund
Patti McClean
Bettie Gustafson

Donations to Bird Friendly Yard Initiative
Greater Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs
Registration is now open for Audubon Arkansas’s BirdLR Birdathon. Birdathons all over the country engage thousands of birders in raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for bird conservation. BirdLR’s Birdathon is a competitive search for birds plus a fun way to raise money for Audubon Arkansas’s bird conservation and environmental education work. Teams of 2-5 will set species and fundraising goals, then collect donations or pledges per species seen. Teams will compete for prizes for the most species seen and money raised. The Birdathon boundary is Pulaski County on May 11 from 12 AM to 6 PM. You don’t have to live in the county to form, join, or sponsor a team. All teams will convene at a Bird Bash tally rally at 6:00 for food, fellowship, and awards. You even get a BirdLR t-shirt!

Last year’s inaugural Birdathon was a success thanks to 43 birders who formed 7 teams. All together teams tallied 137 species and raised $7,483 for Audubon Arkansas’s bird conservation and environmental education programs.

Registration forms are on our website [http://ar.audubon.org/conservation/birdathon](http://ar.audubon.org/conservation/birdathon). The deadline is March 15. The sooner you register your team the sooner Audubon Arkansas will create your team’s profile page to make fundraising easier, e.g. friends and family anywhere in the world can donate online.

Want to support BirdLR but aren’t able to join a Birdathon or Bird Search team? Then Bird Your Way by helping a Birdathon team reach their fundraising goal, donating directly to Audubon Arkansas, or sharing your sightings with us through Facebook using #BirdLR.

By DAN SCHEIMAN

BirdLR Events are Coming – Are You Ready?
Your Trust at Work: AAS Trust Report

By DAN SCHEIMAN
AAS Trust

The call continues for all members, past Trustees, and past grantees to help grow the Endowment-Memorial Fund to $200k by the 50th anniversary in 2022. We need about another $33k within four years. Investment income from the fund pays for grants like the ones below. Tax-deductible contributions can be sent to: Barry Haas, Treasurer, P.O. Box 242088, Little Rock, AR 72223. My thanks to those who have donated, and a special thanks to Dr. Ragupathy Kannan who continues to use his overseas birding tours as a fundraiser for the Trust.

At the fall 2018 meeting the Trustees gave 5 awards totaling $5,960.

- Emily Donahue (M.S., ASU) cached $760 for her study of the winter ecology and physiology of Loggerhead Shrikes.
- Kevin Krajcir (M.S., ASU) received $1,000 to explore the relationship between warblers and their feather mites. He is also the winner of the Doug James Award, for this ground-breaking research and for his contribution to this Society as our Publicity Chair.
- Doug Raybuck (Ph.D., U. TN) netted a record $2,400 to explore Cerulean Warbler winter ecology in Colombia. He also heads up a multi-country, multi-university, multi-disciplinary team studying the full annual life cycle of this species of high conservation concern.
- Jacob Wessels (M.S., ASU) is also studying Cerulean Warblers, and now has another $800 to continue his work previously supported by our Eulalia Araoz Memorial Grant.
- Joseph Youtz, (M.S., ASU) was awarded $1,000, including the Max Parker Award, to continue his examination of Prothonotary Warbler occupancy of fragmented woodlots.

In response to Ninestone Land Trust’s request we challenged them to do their own fundraising to match Trust funds up to $500. With help from Joe Neal’s plea on ARBIRD-L they accomplished this in a matter of hours! Now they have over a thousand dollars to apply to habitat restoration.
SAVE THE DATE: Arkansas Audubon Society spring convention, May 3-5 at Petit Jean Mountain

By SAMANTHA SCHEIMAN
AAS Vice President

Please mark your calendars: the Arkansas Audubon Society's spring convention will be held May 3-5 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute (WRI) atop Petit Jean Mountain.

On Friday evening, May 3, we will celebrate the life of one of our Society’s founders, Dr. Doug James, who passed away in December. Dr. Ragupathy Kannan will give a presentation titled, "Fun, friendship, and fine science—my 30 years with Doug James," which will be immediately followed with an open mike session for people to share their memories. James helped start the Arkansas Audubon Society in 1955 and the Arkansas Audubon Society Trust in 1972 and was one of Arkansas’s leading conservationists.

On Saturday, May 4, our special guest speaker will be Benjamin Vogt, native plant garden designer and author of the book, A New Garden Ethic. Benjamin will give two talks on Saturday, May 4 on the following topics that dovetail with the Society’s Bird Friendly Yard (BFY) program:

2 p.m. - SUSTAINABLE DESIGN FOR GARDEN & HOME
Plants aren’t just pretty decoration – they can be thoughtfully used for a myriad of benefits. From cooling our homes to preventing runoff into storm drains, from cleaning the air and amending soil naturally, plants are useful to us. We’ll explore how native plants can help create a healthy environment for families and wildlife, while learning how to emulate natural processes for less work in garden management and care.

6:30 p.m. - A NEW GARDEN ETHIC
In a time of climate change and mass extinction, how and for whom we garden matters more than ever. This impassioned and provocative talk asks: How can we recognize and develop empathy for other species? What role do native plants have in opening us to the perspectives of others? What benefits happen to our society when we advocate for the equality and freedom of a silent majority -- pollinators, birds, spiders, and more? Through ecology, psychology, garden design, and philosophy, we’ll explore the rich complexity of rethinking pretty in urban and suburban landscapes.

Benjamin will also be available to sell and sign copies of his book. Additionally, the convention will feature birding field trips, student presentations, fellowship with other wildlife enthusiasts, a silent auction, and more! More details will follow soon.

Lastly, a word about lodging: Rooms are reserved at the WRI for the convention ($89/night for all rooms except in the President’s Lodge, where the rooms are $99/night) and will be available for booking as soon as the convention program is finalized and on our website, arbirds.org. However, if you'd prefer to stay at nearby Petit Jean State Park, I suggest booking such accommodations soon if you prefer these alternative options, as Petit Jean State Park is very popular.

Email me directly (samantha.scheiman@gmail.com) if you have any questions at all regarding the spring convention.
Arkansas for Container Deposit Law (CDL) is a grassroots effort to pass CDL legislation in the state of Arkansas, resulting in a 5-10 cent deposit on beverage containers. Glass, plastic, and aluminum containers would all be covered under this proposal. Consumers pay a small deposit upfront when purchasing a beverage and receive it back when the item is returned to be recycled.

This law has the potential to increase recycling efforts – which would lead to a decrease in landfilling. As we all know, birds depend on clean, healthy habitats, and this CDL could help us maintain their homes!

CDLs encourage everyone to recycle. To learn more about the benefits of a CDL visit this website: [https://www.arkansasforcdl.com/benefits/](https://www.arkansasforcdl.com/benefits/)

If you’d like to help Arkansas pass this legislation, there are a couple of things that you can do:

- Create awareness by liking our campaign page on Facebook (facebook.com/ARforCDL).
- Call (or email) your state legislators. For what to say and who to contact visit [https://www.arkansasforcdl.com/get-involved/](https://www.arkansasforcdl.com/get-involved/)
- Take Pictures if you see a beverage container on the ground. Post your pictures online and tag us @arforcdl.

If you have any questions or would like to become further involved, please contact our Campaign Director, Taylor Bridges at whywaste17@gmail.com

Arkansas threw away 1.4 billion beverage containers in 2015!
Ecology Camp Donations
(December 1, 2018 - February 15, 2019)

Fall Appeal (Parents & Grandparents of Campers)
Judy Hunt
Ellen Turner
Fred Berry
Suzanne & Michael Klug

Scholarships & Tuition Assistance
Jacqui Lincoln in memory of Doug James

Memorials & Honoraria
John & Mary Passe-Smith in memory of Grace Kellner
Hailey & Eric Small in memory of Grace Kellner
Dawn & Lawrence Graves in honor of Terry & Judy Butler
Don & Ann Godfrey in memory of Joyce Godfrey
Edward & Cynthia Howington in memory of Mack & Hervey Howington

AAS Trust Donations
(December 1, 2018 - February 15, 2019)

Endowment-Memorial Fund
Bill & Toka Beall in memory of Doug James
Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society in memory of Doug James and Kim Smith
Carolyn Minson
Allan & Kathleen Mueller in memory of Dr. John Paul Jones
Hot Springs Village Audubon Society

*CORRECTION* from the Winter 2018 newsletter:
Richard & Mary Cohoon in memory of Grace Kellner

Max Parker Fund
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Parker in memory of Max and John Parker
Leslie Parker in memory of Max and John Parker

Notes from Your President*
By ROBIN BUFF
AAS President

At the AAS 2018 Fall board meeting the AAS board discussed changes to the delivery of our newsletter. The board decided to move from a printed newsletter to one that is delivered digitally to AAS members. Not only will this save a HUGE amount of money, it is better for the environment. The option of having some of the newsletters printed for members that don’t use the internet and for new members was discussed. Please email me or write me with any input you would like to give on this change in newsletter delivery. Note that members will continue to receive the printed newsletter unless they opt out. If you’d like to opt out, please email our membership chair Cheryl Childers (cherylchilders@outlook.com) stating your request, name, and mailing address with the email subject, "Printed AAS Newsletter Opt Out." Another option to opt out is to complete the below form and mail it to Cheryl at: 1149 Rosellas Way, Alma AR 72921.

*Note: this is repeated from the Winter 2018 Newsletter. If you have already submitted an opt-out form, it is not necessary to submit again.

Printed Newsletter Opt-out Form:

Name: ______________________________________
Email address: ________________________________
Address: _____________________________________
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To opt out of receiving our printed version of the newsletter, please complete this form and mail it to:
Cheryl Childers, 1149 Rosellas Way, Alma AR 72921.