

THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

DECEMBER 2011

Beckham Bird Club, Inc.

Monthly newsletter

Louisville, KY

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Beckham Bird Club will be on Tuesday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. at the Clifton Center, 2117 Payne Street, in the Community Room. If you've been thinking about going to the [Galapagos Islands](#), the December meeting will help you decide. **Kathy and Dick Dennis** took their trip of a lifetime and will share some of the unique birds and other wildlife found in these [Pacific Islands](#) 600 miles off the coast of [Ecuador](#). Many birds appear similar to those we see in [Kentucky](#), but are endemic species that can be found nowhere else in the world.

2012 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Please renew your 2012 membership. Your membership runs from January to December so unless you are a new member and joined in October your membership dues need to be paid by mail or at the meeting. Please use the dues envelope enclosed in last month's newsletter or get a membership form found at [beckhambirdclub.org](#). Fill out the information carefully especially the email address so that it is legible. **Also consider joining as a contributing member.**

UPCOMING FIELD TRIP

Saturday, December 10 8:30 a.m. – Noon	OHIO RIVER, INDIANA SIDE- For winter residents and waterfowl. Meet at Falls of the Ohio State Park parking lot.	Tom Becker 812-923-0145
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PAST FIELD TRIPS

Garvin-Brown Preserve, October 22 - As the group of 19 observers arrived to begin the field trip, it was a very cold morning with frost covering the grass. A bright sunny sky, however, made for a good time to search for birds. A Brown Creeper, numerous Hermit Thrushes, and both White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows greeted the group. Other highlights were Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, both species of Kinglets, and a Junco. Only one warbler species was seen- a Common Yellowthroat. A list of 47 species was tallied at the end of the trip which included 5 species of sparrows.

Cave Hill Cemetery – October 29 - A pair of great-blue heron circled gracefully over the quarry pond where a handful of wood ducks sheltered in the early morning shadows. Two and possibly three Brown Creepers worked the decaying branches of the same tree. Five species of woodpecker, including Northern Flicker, Hairy, and Yellow-breasted Sapsucker were seen as were a Cooper's Hawk and a Red-shouldered Hawk. Other sightings included Dark-eyed Juncos, White-throated, and

Chipping Sparrows, and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. A small flock of Cedar Waxwings dropped into a tree top just long enough for a party of six Beckham members and two guests to snatch a good look in the morning sun. A total of 32 species were recorded on a beautiful fall morning.

E. P. Tom Sawyer State Park, October 16 - The birds were very quiet on this blustery walk which started out cold and slowly warmed up for a nice windy autumn day. Species located included early winter arrivals such as White-throated Sparrows and a lone Dark-eyed Junco. Three Beckham members located 27 species in all.

Taylorville Lake, October 23 - On a cool, dry fall morning, 2 BBC members enjoyed nice views of Golden-crowned Kinglets posing in the sunlight. Three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers seem to follow the birders along much of the trail. Otherwise, it was a slow day of birding though they managed to locate 28 species.

Spencer County/Coateswald Farm, October 26 - Despite intermittent rain, 9 birders met at the home of Dona Coates for a little birdwatching and a fall lunch. Twenty-nine species were found including a Northern Mockingbird doing a great Baltimore Oriole song, Red-winged Blackbirds eating pine seeds, and over 150 Cedar Waxwings eating the persimmons.

Sloughs WMA/Sauerheber Unit, October 29 - Though it was cool in the morning, it warmed up to a very pleasant 60 degrees with great birding. Four BBC members and 4 guests located 74 species that day, including 11 species of waterfowl, mostly dabblers and a flyover flock of Greater White-fronted Geese. Marshy highlights included an American Bittern, a LeConte's Sparrow and a tardy Dickcissel.

Cedar Grove, October 30 - White-crowned Sparrows were abundant as usual in the fall at Cedar Grove. The group of 4 birders had great looks at Swamp, Lincoln's, and Chipping Sparrows. Near the end of the trip, a small flock of Horned Larks flew overhead and a single Pied-billed Grebe was seen on the pond. In all, the group located 40 species.

Freeman Lake, November 2 - On a chilly day to start, everyone was thrilled to see a beautiful Bald Eagle as the first bird of the day. It perched in a tall dead tree for 30 + minutes, at close range, in full sunlight. Other highlights were two Horned Grebes and a close up look at a late, lone Semipalmated Plover among many Killdeer. A total of 30 species were seen.

Joe Creason Park, November 6 - On a mild, sunny fall day, 11 members of the Beckham Bird Club were pleased to find 32 species of birds. Highlights included 2 Winter Wrens, lots of Cedar Waxwings, both Kinglets, a Brown Creeper, and 5 species of woodpeckers, including Hairy and Pileated.

Falls of the Ohio - Despite a mild, though windy fall day, muddy river conditions were not conducive to finding many waterfowl with only two species of ducks being seen. However, 11 BBC members did locate 39 species, including a late Great Egret, three Bald Eagles, a Peregrine Falcon, and one Winter Wren.

Creasey Mahan Nature Center - Three BBC members birded Creasey Mahan despite gusty winds. Sparrows were difficult to locate as they stayed low and in deep brush. They managed to find 28 species including a Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwings, 4 species of Woodpeckers, and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

LOUISVILLE COUNT DINNER AND COMPILATION

If you take part in the Louisville Christmas Bird Count you don't want to miss out on the pot luck dinner and compilation of the day's count on Sunday, December 18. Win Ahrens is again hosting the dinner at his home (21 Autumn Hill, Prospect). Please RSVP either by email winahrens@aol.com or calling 228-5800. Please bring a dish to share. All participants are invited to come and share their day with everyone. We have lots of fun and laughs. Sometimes we even have to wait for the end of a football game to start the compilation.☺

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

This year marks the 112th Christmas Bird Count sponsored by the National Audubon Society. Your participation is needed in one or more of these counts this year. The dates for the local counts are listed below. Since these dates could change due to weather conditions you should sign up to participate at least one week before the count in case the compiler needs to contact you in the event there is a change in the date. If you participated in the Louisville count last year your group leader will be contacting you or you can contact him or her. New participants should contact the compiler.

LOUISVILLE Sunday, December 18	Fee:\$5.00 All new participants contact compiler by email or phone. Compiler: Pat Bell – patjanebell@bellsouth.net or 326-9610
LINCOLN'S BIRTH PLACE/HODGENVILLE Wednesday, December 21	Fee: \$5.00 Contact compiler: Barbara Woerner – Barbara_woerner@hotmail.com or 485-9017
BERNHEIM FOREST Monday, December 26	No Fee. All participants email or call compiler Brainard Palmer-Ball (CP) 502-330-3998 or brainard@mindspring.com
OTTER CREEK Thursday, December 29	No Fee. All participants email or call compiler Brainard Palmer-Ball (CP) 502-330-3998 or brainard@mindspring.com
PARADISE Date TBA	No Fee. All participants email or call compiler Brainard Palmer-Ball for date. (CP) 502-330-3998 or brainard@mindspring.com
MUSCATATUCK NWR Sunday, January 1	Fee: \$5.00 Meet at the Visitor's center at 7:30 a.m. Call 812-522-4352 for details and confirmation.

RARE BIRD ALERTS

On Friday, November 4 the weather conditions were just right so a fallout of waterfowl occurred on the Ohio River. There were thousands of birds including Franklin's Gulls, Bonaparte's Gulls, Surf Scoter, Horned Grebes, Double-crested Cormorants, Lesser Scaups, and other ducks on the river.

On Sunday, November 6, a Saw-whet Owl was found in Brainard Palmer-Ball's front yard. Scolding Chickadees and Tufted Titmouses alerted Brainard to the location of the owl which was high up in a pine tree. Many members came to see this rare and difficult to see owl. A new bird was added to many members' life and state lists after viewing the Saw-whet Owl.

