

THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

FEBRUARY 2011

Beckham Bird Club, Inc.

Monthly Newsletter

Louisville, KY

NEXT MEETING

If you are ready for spring you don't want to miss this month's meeting. It's a program on spring woodland flowers given by **Dr. Rob Kingsolver**, dean and director of Bellarmine University's Center for Regional Environmental Studies. The title of his talk is "**NICHE PARTITIONING IN SPRING EPHEMERALS: HOW DO WOODLAND WILDFLOWERS MAKE A LIVING?**" His talk will examine life histories of woodland wildflowers as adaptations to environmental constraints and in response to competition from other forest plants. A variety of plant life history strategies will be illustrated with photos of wildflower species commonly found in Kentucky forests. Most of the photographs were taken as part of floristic surveys Dr. Kingsolver conducted at John James Audubon Park in Henderson Kentucky, and at Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve in Oldham County Kentucky. Join us on Tuesday, February 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the Clifton Center, 2117 Payne Street, in the Community Room.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

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| Saturday, February 5 8:30 a.m. - Noon | RIVER ROAD For waterfowl and winter birds. Meet in the lower parking lot of Ramada Inn at I-71 and Zorn Avenue. | Bob Johnson 896-9638 |
| Sunday, February 12 8:00 a.m. CST- ??? | PEABODY WMA, OHIO AND MUHLENBURG CO. – For waterfowl, hawks and owls. Meet at Arby's in the service center on the Western Ky. Parkway just before the Beaver Dam exit. Bring lunch. | Ben Yandell 594-3819 |
| Sunday, February 13 9 a.m. – Noon | PUTNEY POND & PROSPECT - Meet at Prospect City Hall, east side of Hwy 42 after 2nd traffic light in Prospect. | Paul McAllister 290-4732 |
| Saturday, February 19 8:30 a.m. - Noon | JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOREST – For winter residents. Meet at Welcome Center, 11311 Mitchell Hill Rd. | Michael Autin 773-0598 |
| Saturday, February 26 8:30 a.m. - Noon | OHIO RIVER, INDIANA SIDE- For winter birds and waterfowl. Meet at Falls of the Ohio State Park parking lot. | Tom & Colleen Becker 812- 923-0145 |
| Saturday, March 5 9:00 a.m. - Noon | FARNSLEY-MOREMEN LEVEE WALK - For winter birds. Meet at the Farnsley-Moremén parking lot to walk the levee trail. | Bob Johnson 896-9638 |
| Sunday, March 6 8:30 a.m. -??? | MUSCATATUCK NWR / HARDY LAKE - For waterfowl and resident species. Meet at the visitor center at 8:30 a.m. Bring lunch. | Pat & Jane Bell 326-9610 |

PAST FIELD TRIPS

Cave Hill Cemetery, January 8 - On a cold, sunny morning in which the cemetery glistened under a light blanket of snow, American Robins by the thousands predominated. They were everywhere in large numbers, eating their fill of holly berries, drinking melting snow on roadways, lining up shoulder to shoulder to take a sip at the edge of the upper lake and later, at the approach of a Cooper's Hawk, flying to cover in an instant. The rest of the list was short including an active flock of Goldfinches, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a Red-tailed Hawk, and two Great Blue Herons, one at the main lake and another on the quarry pond. Two Beckham members recorded just 19 species.

Back Side of Bernheim, January 15 - Ten members and 2 guests found 41 species on the field trip to Bernheim Forest. The day was cool and mostly cloudy; one eagle, an adult Golden, put on a brief show for the group. Other highlights included nice looks at a few adult Red-shouldered Hawks, a couple of Hermit Thrushes, and several Purple Finches.

THREE YOUNG WHOOPING CRANES SHOT DEAD IN GEORGIA

Three juvenile Whooping Cranes making their first southbound migration were found shot to death in a farmer's field near Albany, Ga., on December 30. The cranes, part of Operation Migration's efforts to establish a migrating population of whoopers in the Eastern United States, were released in Wisconsin in October in the hope that they would join Sandhill cranes or other whoopers in the fall migration. Joe Duff, the CEO of Operation Migration, said the killing of the young whoopers is "a bitter pill to swallow. ... For this magnificent species with an already tenuous hold on survival, these mortalities are tragic." Duff said he hopes those responsible are found and punished. The deaths reduce the number of whoopers in the Eastern migratory flock to 91, not counting the 10 birds being led south to their Florida wintering grounds by ultra-light aircraft.

GBBC – FEBRUARY 18-21, 2011

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. This year the count is on February 18-21. Get more information at birdsource.org/gbbc.

BIRD ALERT

An alert was started for a Crested Caracara in Gibson County, Indiana. It was seen on January 12 but was not located the next day. This bird is very rare north of Texas. To see a picture of the bird go to www.facebook.com/amosbutler.

**HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR 2011 BBC MEMBERSHIP?
THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER IF YOU HAVEN'T.**

MARCH DINNER MEETING

Our dinner meeting will be on Tuesday, March 8 at The University Club on the University of Louisville Campus. Directions and a map can be found at uclublouisville.org - click on About Us then click Location. A social hour with a cash bar will begin at 6:00 p.m. followed by a buffet at 7:00 p.m. The price of the dinner is \$30.00. Please extend your hospitality to our members who may need transportation. Please wear your name badge. **The deadline for making reservations is Wednesday, March 2.** Sorry walk-ins can not be accommodated. Refunds are not guaranteed after March 2. **Only reservations with payment will be accepted.**

Our speaker is **Laura Erickson**, the producer of "For the Birds," the longest running radio program about birds in the United States. It airs on several stations in Minnesota, Wisconsin and New York. She is the author of several books including *The Bird Watching Answer Book*, *Sharing the Wonder of Birds with Kids*, and *101 Ways to Help Birds*, which is the topic of her presentation for the Beckham March dinner meeting. She worked at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology for several years, editing their publication *BirdScope* and contributing to their award-winning website, **All About Birds**. She has written articles for most of the birding and conservation magazines including *Birder's World*, *Audubon*, and *Birding* and is a frequent speaker on birds, birding, and conservation. Her "blog" (a column on the internet), which promotes the love, understanding, and protection of birds, can be found at <http://lauraerickson.blogspot.com/>. Laura is a former bird rehabber and is currently licensed to keep an Eastern Screech owl named Archimedes who accompanies her on speaking trips unless they involve overnights. She lives in Duluth, Minnesota with her husband, Russ.

MARCH 8 DINNER MEETING

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Number attending _____ **@ \$30.00 ea.** _____ **Total** _____

Print names of all included in this reservation for place card. _____

Print names of people with whom you wish to be seated. (Table of 8) _____

Deadline March 2.

Make check payable to Beckham Bird Club and bring to February meeting or mail to Jane Bell, 1876 Dove Creek Blvd, Louisville, KY 40242-3492.

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR 2011 BBC MEMBERSHIP!

FIELD TRIP WITH LAURA ERICKSON

Laura Erickson will join us on Wednesday, March 9 at 9:00 a.m. at the Anchorage Trail for a field trip. Meet in the parking lot at Station and Evergreen Roads. This trip is for members of Beckham Bird Club only. No guests. Send in your reservation by March 3. You are also invited to go to lunch with the group at a local restaurant. We need reservations for the field trip and/or the lunch to let the restaurant know how many will be there.

**Field Trip and/or Lunch with Laura Erickson
Wednesday, March 9
Members Only**

Name(s) _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Number attending field trip ____ . Number attending lunch. ____

Mail to Jane Bell, 1876 Dove Creek Blvd, Louisville, KY 40242-3492 or email
patjanebell@bellsouth.net. Deadline March 2.