

THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

APRIL 2011

Beckham Bird Club, Inc.

Monthly Newsletter

Louisville, KY

NEXT MEETING

Meet the Raptors of Kentucky with a presentation from Raptor Rehabilitation of Kentucky Inc (RROKI), April 12th, 2117 Payne Street, in the Community Room, at 7:00 pm at The Clifton Center. RROKI educators will bring four live birds of prey to the program: Great Horned Owl, Bald Eagle, Common Barn Owl, and Mississippi Kite. You'll hear the natural history of each species, along with each bird's individual story. Learn about where these amazing birds are found and how you can protect them and preserve their habitats. RROKI cares for between 250 and 300 injured birds of prey annually. The presentation at the Clifton Center gives you an insider's look at the rehab process and the fostering program which allows the group to release dozens of orphaned raptors each year.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, April 9 8:00 a.m. CDT - ??Moderate/Strenuous	SLOUGHS WMA, HENDERSON CO., KY —For waterfowl and migrants. Bring lunch, shoes for wading, & extra clothes. Meet at the observation platform on Highway 268. For directions check DeLorme Atlas page 44 quadrant A 2&3.	David Roemer (270)781-6190
Sunday, April 10 8:00 a.m. – Noon	TOM SAWYER PARK – For spring migrants. Meet at the second parking lot on Freys Hill Rd near archery field	Carl Bochmann 618-0574
Saturday, April 16 8:30 a.m. – Noon	JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOREST – For spring migrants. Meet at Welcome Center, 11311 Mitchell Hill Rd.	Sandy Brue sbrue@windstream.net 270-358-5159
Sunday, April 17 9:00 a.m. – Noon	MOUNT ST. FRANCIS, IN - Meet at the parking lot near front entrance of Mt. St. Francis for late spring migrants and early summer residents. Take I-64 west to exit 119, follow hwy 150 about two miles through two traffic lights. Entrance is left at the third light.	Rod Goforth 812-923-1292 cell: 812-786-0470
Saturday, April 23 8:30 a.m. – Noon	CAVE HILL CEMETERY —For spring migrants. Meet inside the front gate on Baxter Avenue.	Bob Johnson 896-9638 Eddie Huber 261-9698
Friday – Sunday April 29 – 31st	KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING – Barren River State Park. Go to the KOS web site for more details	
Sunday, May 1 8:00 a.m. CDT - ??? Moderate	MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK – For spring migrants. Meet at the service center in the park just past the campground entrance. This is the parking lot just to the right of the gas station. Bring lunch.	Pat & Jane Bell 326-9610
Wednesday, May 4 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	LOOP ISLAND WETLANDS - For spring migrants. Meet at Dairy Queen Restaurant, 2116 E. Spring in New Albany at 8:15 AM. Loop Island is one mile away. For more information Call Del	Del Striegel 812-951-2368

Saturday, May 7 8:30 a.m. – Noon	ANCHORAGE TRAIL - Meet at the trailhead in Anchorage at the intersection of Evergreen Rd and Station Rd just past the fire station.	Pat & Jane Bell 326-9610
Sunday, May 8 8:30 a.m. – Noon	JOE CREASON PARK/BEARGRASS NATURE PRESERVE - For spring migrants. Meet at the Metro Parks Administration Bldg. off Trevilian Way	Barbara Woerner 485-9017

PAST FIELD TRIPS

February 13, Putney Pond - The party of 7 arrived to ice on the pond with small sections of open water. Mallards and Green-winged Teal were the only waterfowl found there. Several resident birds were showing signs of spring, displaying and singing, including Song Sparrows and Carolina Wren. The group located 35 species, highlights being Brown Creeper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Field Sparrow, and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

February 19, Jefferson Memorial Forest - Many of the group of ten birdwatchers were treated to a Ruby-crowned Kinglet as the first bird of the day. Birding was initially slow but picked up with several highlights throughout the trip, including approximately 50 Pine Siskins at a new feeding station. Several flocks of Sandhill Cranes flew overhead. Other highlights included Red-breasted Nuthatches, Field, Swamp, and Fox Sparrows. In all, the group located 39 species

Muscatatuck NWR and Hardy Lake – March 6 - It was a cold, cloudy, windy day for the eight observers on the Muscatatuck and Hardy Lake field trip. Despite the weather the group saw 62 species including 15 species of ducks. Fox, White-crowned, White-throated, and Tree Sparrows, Purple Finches, and other birds were at the feeders at the Visitor's Center. Five Sandhill Cranes were at McDonald Marsh. Phoebes and Tree Swallows had returned. A flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers and a Pine Warbler flitted about in the trees just as the trip ended at Hardy Lake.

Freeman Lake, March 12 - Seven club members enjoyed a windy but nice day. Eddie Huber had alerted us to look for a Ross' Goose and the group did find it. Other highlights were Tree Swallows, Horned Grebes, and 200+ Sandhill Cranes flying north. Then to end on a high note, a Red-shouldered Hawk was seen flying over the lake with a snake in its talons. In all, the group located 37 species.

Caperton Swamp Clean Up

Caperton Swamp, located on River Road at its intersection with Indian Hills Trail and River Road, has a long history as a premier birding location. Join Metro Parks Natural Areas Division in a cleanup effort to restore this landscape to its former beauty. Volunteers will be removing trash (tires, scrap metal and litter) and/or assisting in invasive plant removal. Water, tools and gloves are supplied. This opportunity is suitable for ages 14 and up. Youth under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Closed toe shoes are required. Large groups may need to park across the street at Cox's Park. The dates and time are Saturdays, April 23 and 30, and May 14 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

THE BIG YEAR – THE BOOK AND THE MOVIE

In 1998 three men, Sandy Komito, Al Levantin, and Greg Miller, start on a quest to see as many North American species of birds as they could in one year. Working independently they traverse North America in all directions trying to see and hear every resident, accidental, and vagrant bird possible. They maxed out credit cards and spent up to \$12,000 a month all in the name of trying to beat the previous record held by Sandy Komito. *The Big Year* by Mark Obmascik is the story of these three men on their journey and their encounters with mountain lions, sea sickness, helicopter ride, freezing weather, mosquitoes, and you name it. Many of you read this book when it came out in 2004 but you might want to read it again in anticipation of the upcoming movie, *The Big Year*, to be released this year. Tentative release date is October 14. According to the web site Steve Martin will play Leventin, Jack Black as Miller, and Owen Wilson as Komito. Do you agree with the casting? If you haven't read the book you are in for a real treat. It is a fun book with all the exploits, characters, and scheming that goes on in their quest. Even El Nino has a role in helping these birders reach their goal as the top birder for 1998. The book is available at the library and at your favorite bookstore.

MARCH DINNER MEETING

Our annual dinner took place for the first time at the University Club on March 8. We had 89 reservations this year. Our speaker, Laura Erickson, spoke to the group about 101 ways to save birds. One way was simply talking to other people about birds so they will become interested. Everyone enjoyed the evening, the food, and our speaker. Mark your calendar for next year for the second Tuesday of March.

Congratulations to Carol Besse, who was awarded the 2011 Beckham Bird Club Award for her contribution to our club while president and chairperson of the BBC Birdathon. She has contributed much to the conservation of birds in the years since she has been a member of BBC.

The field trip that was scheduled for Wednesday was cancelled due to the rain but the group met at the Falls of the Ohio State Park for another program by Laura Erickson on "Owls and Hummingbirds", which was very informative about these two unique birds. Afterwards the group enjoyed lunch at Buckheads.

Thanks to all who helped organize the dinner meeting and the Wednesday program, much work is required to make these events happen. Thanks also go to the telephone committee and to those who worked on putting together the membership directory for 2011.

KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPRING MEETING

The annual KOS spring meeting will be held at Barren River State Park on April 29 through May 1. The weekend includes talks and field trips. The Saturday evening program will be given by Julie Zickefoose, birder, writer, and artist. She will speak on "The Bird-friendly Backyard", which details her transformation of the 80 acre farm where she lives into a wildlife sanctuary. Julie Zickefoose is also a contributing editor of *Birdwatcher's Digest*.

2011 BBC BIRDATHON

It is that time again when some of our members will be asking you to contribute to the 2011 BBC Birdathon. You will be contacted at the meeting, by email, or telephone. We hope you will contribute as you have done in the past. If you have not contributed before you are encouraged to do so. We have many worthy projects that need to be funded. These projects will be available on our web site. The people you sponsor will have a list and the projects will also be announced at the April meeting. Last year we distributed \$13,585 to the different organizations that applied for grants. The money we collect will help the birds and the environment.

ODDS AND ENDS

- The program for the May meeting will be Dr. Mark Wourms, who will speak on “The importance of Large Forest Blocks and the Future of Bernheim Forest.’
- Elections for officers and directors of Beckham Bird Club will be at the May meeting.
- The annual BBC June picnic will be at Bernheim Forest again on June 5. Make plans to attend.
- Cats are birds’ number 1 worst enemy. Read the article in the New York Times that tells about the impact both feral and house cats have on birds. Cats, a non-native species, also impact native small mammals and reptiles. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/21/science/21birds.html?hpw>
- **If you have not sent your letters to the Commissioners of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife opposing the hunting of Sandhill Cranes please do so this month.**