



THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

MAY 2017

"Birds and Bugs"



Rick Ahrens is an outdoor educator who lives in Eugene OR. He has birded on all seven continents and is a member of the renowned bird group "The Road Show" along with his brother Win and Dr. Mark Whiteside of Key West FL. They have been birding together nearly yearly since their first group trip in the '80s. This presentation will focus on the diet of migratory birds. Much of migration is driven by seasonal availability of bugs in the northern latitudes. In this lively and informative slide show, we'll look at numerous examples of bird-bug

interactions and discover the importance of birds to the overall health of our ecosystems. **Join us on Tuesday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m. at the Clifton Center on Payne Street.**



**TUESDAY, MAY 9
VOTE AT THIS MONTH'S MEETING
FOR OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS
OF BECKHAM BIRD CLUB**

Candidates for 2017 to 2018 are the following:

President – Jamie Baker
Vice-president – Andrew Melynkovich
Secretary – Jean Jones
Treasurer – Tom Ackerson

Directors – Karen Bonsell and Steve Deetsch

Joanne Luyster and Pat Bell will continue on the board for another year. Carol Besse will continue on the board as past-president. Their duties will begin on June 15.

REMEMBER BBC PICNIC- JUNE 4
Reservation form on page 5

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLEDGE TO THE BBC BIRDATHON?

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Please refer to the schedule you received last month or to the BBC website for full details.

Sat., April 29 – 8:00 – Noon Beckley Creek-Grand Allee section

Sun. April 30 – 8:00 – Noon Turkey Run Park

Wed., May 3 – 9:00 – 11:30 a.m. Anchorage Trail -- meet behind church

Sat., May 6 – 8:30 -11:30 a.m. Beckley Creek Park

Sun., May 7 - 8:00 – Noon Pope Lick Park

Thurs., May 11 – Hayswood Nature Preserve, Corydon, IN

Sat., May 13 – Global Big Day

Sat., May 20 – 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Broad Run Park

Sun., May 12 – 4:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Morgan Conservation Park



A CHANGE AND CORRECTION TO THE FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

Change - May 4, Anchorage Trail trip has been changed to Wednesday, May 3- Meet in the church parking lot.

Correction- There is no meeting on June 13.

It's going to be big!

The first Saturday in May is for the horses. The second one is for the birds. It is the annual Global Big Day, organized by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, the same fine feathered folks who bring us e-Bird, Birds of America Online and all those other wonderful birding resources.

This year, the Beckham Bird Club is using Global Big Day on May 13 to answer the following question: How many species of birds can be seen in Jefferson County in one day?

The record thus far appears to be somewhere between 125 and 130. It will be tough matching that toward the end of the migration season, but if enough birders spend enough time covering enough territory – and IF the weather cooperates – it might be approachable.

Birders will be needed to do everything from listening for nightjars and owls at dawn and dusk to covering the best hotspots in the county to hiking into the hills in search of elusive species (Worm-eating Warblers at Scott's Gap, anyone?) You can put in as little time as you wish (tick the Mississippi Kites in St. Matthews) or all day.

Andrew Melnykovich is coordinating the effort. Watch for an e-mail from him with details very soon or contact him at estiles74@gmail.com or 502-608-4655 if you want to participate.



A Plea from Field Trip Coordinator Andrew Melnykovich

Since assuming field trip organizing duties last year, I have noted that the Beckham Bird Club is relying on an ever-smaller core group of people to lead field trips. That is making it increasingly difficult to maintain our goal of at least one field trip per weekend from late August through mid-June. We really need more field trip leaders.

The most common reason I hear for not leading field trips is "I am not an expert birder." You don't need to be. I certainly would not call myself an expert, or even an advanced birder. I am at best an advanced intermediate. Most of the people who come on the field trips I lead could easily take my place.

The requirements for leading field trips are fairly simple:

1. An enthusiasm for birds and sharing that enthusiasm with others.
2. A good knowledge of the place in which you will be leading the trip.
3. An ability to identify the birds that you are most likely to encounter.
4. A willingness to take attendance and fill out a trip report, as well as file and share a checklist on E-bird.

If you are interested and willing to give trip leadership a try, please contact me at estiles74@gmail.com. I will add you to the list of people I contact when putting together the quarterly field trip schedules. Which brings me to the final qualification: you will have to learn to put up with my nagging as the deadline for completing the schedule draws near. Thanks.

GARVIN BROWN AND UNLEASHED DOGS



A letter was sent to Meme Runyon, Executive Director of Riverfields, stating our concerns about birding in Garvin Brown Preserve and having encounters with dogs off their leashes. Below is her reply.

Thank you again for your concern for Garvin Brown Preserve. Since its' opening 20 years ago, River Fields has endeavored to manage the property with a balance of conservation values in mind: public access, wildlife habitat, agriculture, and open space. In general, we have been pleased with the way these different goals have been respected by the people who use the Preserve, and we feel it has been generally successful.

Unfortunately, in recent years, some dog owners have been less respectful. As you know, there is a leash law in Metro Louisville, and that applies to the Garvin Brown Preserve. For many years that was mostly respected or dogs were under control, but in the last few years we have observed more and more dogs off leash and some out of the control of their owners. We are very disappointed with this development, and we share your concern about the impacts to wildlife that are occurring as a result of these off-leash dogs. In addition, visitors have been tearing down signage and removing our brochures! River Fields is working on a response to this growing problem, and will be installing additional permanent signage this summer as a first step. In another stewardship step, we are beginning a long-term invasive management program.

We hope that the Garvin Brown Preserve can benefit the public in many ways, and we hope to have the public's cooperation in these goals. We are grateful for your input and we are very happy to hear that you enjoy the Preserve.

Meme Sweets Runyon Executive Director



The Annual Beckham Bird Club Picnic will be at CREASEY-MAHAN NATURE PRESERVE on Sunday, June 4 at 4:00 p.m.

Join us for a fun afternoon of food, birding and friendship. Bring a dish to share, insect repellent, a chair

and, of course, your binoculars. Cost is \$3.00 per person (includes chicken, drinks, etc.) or \$1.00 (no chicken, but covers cost of drinks, etc.)

Creasy Mahan Visitor Center, take highway 42 east and left at route 1793, drive about a 1/2 mile to sign on the right. GPS: 38.400384, -85.590180

BBC is going green so we are asking you to bring your own cloth napkin. If you like you may also bring your own utensils.

PICNIC RESERVATIONS – DEADLINE June 2

NAME _____ PHONE _____

I will bring ___salad/vegetable ___desert ___other(_____)

Number attending at \$3.00 _____

Number attending at \$1.00 _____ Total \$ _____

Make check payable to **Beckham Bird Club**. Mail to Pat Bell, 1876 Dove Creek Blvd, Louisville, KY 40242-3492 or bring to the May meeting.

DON'T FORGET TO MAKE YOUR PLEDGE TO THE 2017 BBC BIRDATHON!!!

PAST FIELD TRIPS

Saunders Springs, April 1 - Eight members and 1 guest journeyed out on a cool morning to enjoy the early spring avian arrivals and floral blooms. We were a couple of weeks premature of peak wildflower blooming and migration seemed to be a little slow as our group tallied a modest 35 species, but there were some pretty flowers and some good bird species for early April. Warblers we saw included Louisiana Waterthrush, Pine, Yellow-Throated, Yellow-Rumped, and Black-and White Warblers. We heard an early Wood Thrush singing at a distance, and also got nice looks at a Hermit Thrush, Red-Headed woodpeckers, and a Hairy Woodpecker. One treat we did not expect was that many of the common birds were singing their uncommon songs, presumably to advertise for mates. In particular, the Golden-Crowned and Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, and Brown Creepers gave some wonderful, and perhaps unique, performances.

Goose Pond, March 18 - Old man winter must have been tired of people constantly lamenting his absence as the unseasonably mild weather gave way just in time for the trip. Still, the 8 members, who braved the cold and persistent winds by periodically warming up in the car, were rewarded with 69 species and 3,454 individual birds. Highlights from the day included 3 pairs of Whooping Cranes, numerous Rough-Legged Hawks hovering like Kestrels, 10 Bald Eagles, hundreds of American White Pelicans soaring and circle feeding

together. The group saw 20 species of waterfowl, which included Greater-White-fronted Geese, Trumpeter Swan, Northern Pintail, American Widgeon, Canvasback, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teals, Redheads, and Red-Breasted Mergansers. 6 species of shorebird were also recorded. Many thanks to everyone who came out for a very enjoyable day of birding!

Anchorage Trail, April 8 - An unexpected find for the 15 observers on the Beckham Bird Club field trip to the Anchorage Trail was a Ross's Goose on Willow Lake, a first for the trail. Wood Ducks and Blue-winged Teal were also seen on the lake. A few summer residents had returned to the park - one early Chimney Swift, Eastern Phoebe, Tree, Rough-winged, and Barn Swallows, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, and Brown Thrashers. A single Hermit Thrush, both species of Kinglets, and White-throated Sparrows were good finds. Forty-seven species were added to the list by the end of the trip.

Hayes Kennedy/Garvin Brown, April 9 - Beckham Bird Club trip with 10 members had good looks at Lesser Yellowlegs and great comparison of Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal together on the pond. Several Brown Thrashers were seen and heard and numerous Tree Swallows populated the bluebird houses. A side trip to the Louisville Water Company provided the groups with great views of the Bald Eagles and their nest. One adult and two babies were seen in or near the nest. A Turkey was seen displaying and a large flock of Cormorants were seen high in the sky.

Sloughs WMA, April 15 - Thirteen participants enjoyed balmy weather, although the stiff breeze made finding birds difficult, particularly during the afternoon. Marshing was, well to put it bluntly, horrible ... the group only kicked up three Soras and two Marsh Wrens; no other rails, marsh sparrows, or bitterns. Songbirds, too, were not spectacular although it is always nice to see the returning breeders. A Lark Sparrow on McDonald Landing Road was kicked up in the afternoon. Shorebirds became the focus and highlight group of the day. Charlie Plush, manager of the Sloughs WMA, has altered the management regime for at least one of the units this spring and is keeping water on the Woods Tract North. This has resulted in a spectacular flock of Lesser Yellowlegs and associated less common species to gather there. Late in the day, 1000-1200 shorebirds were in the flock, which also included at least 12 Semi Plovers, 17 Least, 40 Dunlin, 30 Pectorals, 10-15 Greater Yellowlegs, 1 (possibly 2) Wilson's Phalaropes, a Stilt Sandpiper, and up to 3 Long-billed Dowitchers. Wilson's Snipe and Solitary Sandpipers were seen at a number of places - for a shorebird list of 14 for the day. Other shallow water bodies in the area also had shorebirds including a Black-necked Stilt at Horse Pond Slough on West Franklin Road, and small numbers of Dunlin and Long-billed Dowitchers at a few other spots. Horseshoe Road Slough had a few birds, but will get better as it draws down in coming weeks.

Creasey Mahan, April 22 - Rain delayed the start by 2 hours, but those who waited out the rain were rewarded with the sights and sounds of Yellow and Yellow-Rumped Warblers, Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, Black-Throated Green Warblers, two Blue Headed Vireos, House Wrens, and a Broad Winged Hawk. We ventured back to the lake on the north-east side of the park and heard a Yellow-Throated Warbler and a Northern Parula singing, as well as many Northern Rough-Winged Swallows. Purple Martins, Tree Swallows, and Eastern Meadowlarks were seen in the open field ponds. We also had great looks at a male and female Pileated Woodpecker working to excavate nest cavities in a dead tree. Thanks to everyone who came out!

Mammoth Cave NP, April 23 - The weather was dreadful (cold and rainy) this year and made for some tough birding. Twelve hardy birders spent the day recording 56 species. Fourteen species of warblers were added to the list with especially good looks at Parula, Yellow-Throated, Cerulean, Black-and-white, Worm-eating, Ovenbird, Kentucky and Hooded. Two Red-breasted Nuthatches were nice finds. A few Wood Thrushes were heard singing in the woods and both Summer and Scarlet Tanagers lit up the trees like red Christmas ornaments. One other highlight was a pretty Great-crested Flycatcher.