



THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

SEPTEMBER 2020

ALL BBC ACTIVITIES SUSPENDED THROUGH THE END OF 2020

COVID-19 update from the Board:

The BBC board has made the difficult decision to suspend all activities through the end of 2020.

At this point, we do not know when St. Mark's Episcopal Church will reopen, so it is impossible to schedule meetings and book speakers for the next few months. We are hoping that the exciting speakers we had booked for this year will be able to join us in 2021.

After surveying our field trip leaders, the board also has decided to suspend field trips. Even though the risk of contracting COVID-19 is much smaller outdoors, there simply are not enough field trip leaders who feel comfortable leading group activities at this time.

With many schools in our area resuming classes in the next few weeks, the coronavirus situation in Kentucky and Indiana will be quite unpredictable, making it even more difficult to plan activities.

Although we are hopeful that we can resume activities in 2021, that will depend on the course of the pandemic. Much will rest on whether an effective vaccine is developed soon and becomes generally available by late this year or early next. However, we can't count on that occurring.

Therefore, it may well be that we lose an entire year of programming or more. The BBC board will be meeting in October to discuss, among other things, the status of next year's annual dinner. We do know that it likely will not occur in March.

Also, on the agenda for October is the allocation of Birdathon funds. So, at least in that important respect, the good work of the Beckham Bird Club continues uninterrupted. We welcome additional contributions through August and September – conservation needs are ongoing.

We know everyone is anxious to resume meetings and field trips, But, for now, it is much safer to enjoy the beauty of birds on your own, whether in the field or in your backyard. Use your time at home to improve your birding knowledge and skills. Review your field guides or brush up on birdsong identification by using a birding app or online database. The studying you do now will pay off once this is all over, which cannot happen soon enough.

The BBC Board thanks you for your patience. We recognize that meetings and field trips are the reason many of you are BBC members. We share your frustration at not having those activities

available for our enjoyment and education. We trust that you will continue to support the Beckham Bird Club and participate even more enthusiastically once that becomes possible.

Thank you. THE BBC BOARD



We wish to extend our sympathy to the family of Rose Mary Toebbe who passed away on July 27. Rose Mary and Lawrence Toebbe, her husband, were faithful members of BBC who regularly came to our meetings and always sat in the front seats on the right. Rose Mary led a very active life and participated in many organizations

How to Safely Stay in Touch with the Birding World

With the coronavirus wreaking havoc on our schedules and our lives, we miss seeing each other at meetings and on field trips. And while it appears this will remain the case for the remainder of 2020, there *are* ways to stay in touch with what your fellow birders are up to, here in Louisville and even across the world. Like so many things these days, the best way to stay in touch is online, so here's a brief tutorial on how to use online tools to find out what birds are being seen by others.

The first tool is the statewide Listserv called BIRDKY. Birders from across the state write short reports or post lists of birds they've seen with locations and other details. You can sign up to receive these reports as emails from BIRDKY. To sign up, send an email to BIRDKY-request@freelists.org with "**subscribe**" in the subject line.

The second tool is a versatile and comprehensive database called eBird. eBird collects and shares birding data from across the world as well as in our local area. You can set up an account in eBird and use it to track your own sightings or you can just use it to look at reports from fellow birders. To see what birds are being reported locally, go to <https://ebird.org>. From the main page click on the word "**explore.**" In the "**Regions**" box that appears, type "**Jefferson, Kentucky.**" This will take you to a page with details specific to Jefferson County, KY. On the right side of the page you'll see a list of Recent Sightings. Click on the date in blue text to see details of each birder's observations. This page is full of other wonderful information about local birding including a list of hotspots within the county ranked by the number of species seen and an illustrated checklist with photos and details of when each species is most likely to be seen here.

We hope you will take advantage of these wonderful tools to stay in touch with the local birding community and we look forward to seeing all of you — socially distanced of course—when the next great bird is found nearby.

BIRDING IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Even though our club has cancelled our upcoming field trips we hope you are still out birding. Migration is picking up and there are lots of birding to be done in the next weeks. So, grab your mask and binoculars and hit the birding trail at some of our popular birding destinations around Louisville. Here is a summary of what is being seen.

ANCHORAGE TRAIL - Many beautiful birds make their summer homes on the trail. Look for House Wrens, Catbirds, Baltimore Orioles, Barred Owls, Green Herons, Common Yellowthroats and Wood Thrush. Now we have not only these birds to enjoy, but fall migration is beginning. Recently reported species include Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, Red-eyed Vireos, and Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Redstart, Black-and-White, Nashville, Yellow, Wilson's and Yellow-throated Warblers. Plus, many many more.

BECKLEY CREEK – GRAND ALLEE – A visit to the Parklands is such a treat. Birds can be found almost everywhere. Red-headed Woodpeckers are located all along the creek. Both Baltimore and Orchard Orioles fly around in the sycamore trees. Common Yellowthroats are abundant in the grasslands and look for Blue Grosbeaks, Chats and Indigo Buntings there as well. Look for Acadian Flycatchers, Prothonotary Warblers and Parulas, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Willow and Acadian Flycatchers.

FALLS OF OHIO NATIONAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA (KY) – This area has been a hub of activity recently with hundreds of stately white Great Egrets. Large numbers of Great Blue Herons, Double-crested Cormorants, and Black Vultures are also present. Other unusual visitors at the Falls include American Avocets, Caspian Terns and one Black Tern, Cattle Egrets, a Lesser Black-backed Gull and Herring Gulls and two Snowy Egrets. Now for the climax of all of this – a **WOOD STORK** (only the second record for Jefferson County) has been frequenting the area.

Other Hotspots – As migration gets in full swing here are other places to hit the birding trails: Hays Kennedy/Garvin Brown; Turkey Run in the Parklands; Cherokee Park, Tom Sawyer State Park and Harrods Creek.



Thanks to Jamie Baker for the pictures of some of the rare birds that have been seen recently – Wood Stork, Snowy Egret, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Swallow-tailed Kite.



RARE BIRDS STILL VISITING KENTUCKY

During the winter season many unusual birds were sighted in Kentucky. This trend has continued well into the summer months. Birders are excited in Louisville with the sighting of a Wood Stork at the Falls of the Ohio. A Brown Pelican turned up at Doe Run Lake in Meade County. Roseate Spoonbills, both Black-bellied and Fulvous Whistling Ducks, Swallow-tailed Kites have been discovered in various counties. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen at the Minor Clark Fish Hatchery. White-winged Doves have made appearances. So be on the look out as you just never know when a rare bird will pop up in your binoculars or outside your window.

BBC Conservation Report September 2020

In 2017, the Department of the Interior overturned decades of bipartisan precedent to say that the **Migratory Bird Treaty Act** (MBTA)'s protections apply only to activities that purposefully kill birds, exempting all industrial hazards from enforcement. Any "incidental" death—no matter how inevitable, avoidable or devastating to birds—became immune from enforcement under the law. A federal court judge ruled in August that this interpretation was "contrary to the plain meaning of the MBTA."

<https://abcbirds.org/article/court-upholds-mbta-2020/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=35d5fb0a-34ce-4de6-ac76-6befd72cc6aa>

In a bipartisan vote Congress passed [the Great American Outdoors Act](#), providing permanent, mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at no additional cost to taxpayers. President Trump signed the bill in August. The bill also creates a new fund to address deferred maintenance projects at the National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Education schools.

https://www.audubon.org/news/the-great-american-outdoors-act-benefits-birds-people-and-parks-every-state?ms=policy-adv-email-ea-x-engagement_20200814_advisory&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement_20200814_advisory&emci=21fe8949-39de-ea11-8b03-00155d0394bb&emdi=89a7bf90-5cde-ea11-8b03-00155d0394bb&ceid=1314690

A broad coalition of justice and environmental groups sued the Trump administration over its regulations that would gut environmental reviews and silence community input. The suit addresses concerns over the **National Environmental Policy Act** (NEPA), which states the federal government must consider the environmental impacts of its major actions and then put that assessment out for public review and comment.

https://www.audubon.org/news/audubon-joins-coalition-sue-administration-over-harmful-nepa-rules?ms=policy-adv-email-ea-x-engagement_20200814_advisory&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eng

[agement_20200814_advisory&emci=21fe8949-39de-ea11-8b03-00155d0394bb&emdi=89a7bf90-5cde-ea11-8b03-00155d0394bb&ceid=1314690](https://www.galapagos.org/blog/fragile-landscape-for-penguins/)

Nesting **Galapagos penguins** have unique concerns. Instead of dealing with cold, they must minimize the exposure of the eggs and chicks to the intense sun, as well as predators.

<https://www.galapagos.org/blog/fragile-landscape-for-penguins/>

Many islands around the globe have suffered a biodiversity crisis. But Mexican biologists have **restored populations of auklets, Murrelets, petrels, gulls, terns, boobies, and pelicans** to remote islands.

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/mexicos-conservation-efforts-spur-dramatic-recoveries-for-20-species-of-seabirds/>



KOS FALL MEETING

Again, the fall meeting will be virtual due to the pandemic. Last spring there were many fun and informative activities that you could participate in. Hope you will do so again this fall in September. More information will be available on the KOS website at birdky.org or birdKY.

2020 BBC BIRDATHON

If you haven't made a donation to the BBC Birdathon there is still time to do so. We are lacking nearly \$7000 toward our goal of \$20,000. At the next BBC Board meeting in October we will be distributing our funds to the different organizations that requested grants. Please help us out by sending your donation to the Beckham Bird Club, P.O. Box 5301, Louisville, KY 40255-0301



For information for Kentucky voters go to govoteky.com.

For information for Indiana voters go to Indianavoters.com.