



THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG

APRIL 2023

P.O. BOX 5301 LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40255-0301



APRIL PROGRAM

Just as we are getting ready for spring migration another phenomenon is taking place. Beautiful wildflowers are blooming so our presenter Tavia Cathcart Brown is going to give a program on **Flora Lore & Uses – Fascinating stories about flowers.** Tavia will present vivid examples of how Native Americans and early pioneers used plants as medicinal aids. Discover myths, legends, and lore spotlighting wildflowers that were revered and sometimes feared. Many of you will know Tavia as she is the Executive Director of Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve.

Our meeting is on Tuesday, April 11, 7:00 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 2822 Frankfort Ave, Louisville, KY 40206, 38.254256, -85.689458. St. Mark's is at the corner of Frankfort Avenue and Kennedy Ave. Please enter by way of the back door near the parking lot.

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE



The field trip schedule for April, May and June is included in this newsletter for those receiving it by mail. For those receiving by email there will be a link and it is also available on the BBC web page. **Please read the guidelines for our field trips before coming on one.** A big thank you to all the leaders for volunteering to lead a trip.

REMINDER: Bring your bug spray. Ticks have been reported. Chiggers and mosquitoes are waiting for you.



Due to events in the parks some will be closed especially in the morning. The following are some that are closed:

April 15, Broad Run; April 22 and June 3, Beckley Creek;

April 30, Cherokee and Seneca Parks: June 10 – Turkey Run

PAST FIELD TRIPS

BECKLEY PARK GRAND ALLEE – FEBRUARY 26 Beckham Bird Club Field Trip - We may have broken an attendance record on this field trip!! Thirty-six members and guests met to find American Woodcocks!!! It was a beautiful evening with the moon, stars and planets shining overhead. All participants were able to see and hear displaying woodcocks. One bird spread his wings and strutted after a female to gain her attention. We watched several birds twirl into the sky and returned to the same spot where they had started. Nine species were seen in all. It was a great night to be outdoors enjoying the beauty of nature. Check the BBC ebird checklist for pictures of the Woodcocks.
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S129746733>



MUSCATATUCK NWR/HARDY LAKE- MARCH 5 - Beckham Bird Club Field Trip to Muscatatuck NWR and Hardy Lake - A wonderful day of birding was had by the 14 observers who arrived at the refuge to begin our avian journey. Visiting the feeders produced Red-breasted Nuthatches, Red-headed Woodpecker, Purple Finch, and Fox Sparrow to mention a few. We found one Tree Swallow and a WHITE PELICAN was seen by some of the observers. Eleven species of ducks were on the refuge including Blue-winged Teal. Only 17 Sandhill Cranes were seen as these birds left our area early and headed north. Arriving at Hardy Lake we would find the water covered in waterfowl. Common Loons, Horned Grebes, one Bonaparte's Gull, 25 Green-winged Teal, 8 Canvasback, 40 Redhead, 13 Bufflehead, 33 Red-breasted Mergansers and 25 Ruddy Ducks were enjoying the waters of the lake. A total of 62 species were seen at both places. Another interesting part of our field trip was seeing the first snake of the season-

a DeKay's Brown Snake. Birding is so much fun! Come join us next time!

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S130242705> , <https://ebird.org/checklist/S130257683>



BERNHEIM FOREST – MARCH 11

Fourteen birders met at the Lake Nevin parking lot for a morning of birding, and ten continued on for a second walk near the Visitor Center after the first walk concluded.

The birds were active and singing, making our walk that much more enjoyable. We had 37 species on the day total--highlights included a good number of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Warblers (singing), and Tree Swallows on our first trip; more Red-breasted Nuthatches and singing Pine Warblers, Cedar Waxwings, and two Fox Sparrows in the same tree singing softly to each other on our second trip. Everyone agreed it was a great day to be out in nature!

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S130687599> , <https://ebird.org/checklist/S130688334>),



ANCHORAGE TRAIL – MARCH 15 BBC field trip. Sunny skies and calm wind. The temperature at the start was in the high 20s, rising to the low forties by the end. Twenty-three birders met at Anchorage Trail for a birding outing with Tuesday night's dinner meeting speaker. Although cold, the birds were singing and very active with the Tufted Titmice, Northern Cardinals and Carolina Chickadees leading the way. We also had a nice variety of waterfowl on the lake. A beautiful morning to be out with fellow bird lovers! <https://ebird.org/checklist/S130996508>



Thanks to Anna Perry, James Wheatley, Steve Brown and Pam Spaulding for the pictures of our field trip participants. Hope you can join us on our next field trips during the upcoming migration season.

2023 Birdathon

Each year Beckham Bird Club supports different organizations that in turn support birds in different ways. This year the BBC board has selected the following organizations to receive grants through our annual Birdathon. To see a complete description of these projects, go to beckhambirdclub.org and click on activities. Several members of BBC will be emailing or calling you to ask that you support this effort to raise money. Last year we raised just over \$22,000. We hope to meet or exceed that amount. How does the Birdathon work? You will be asked to pledge a set amount or an amount for each bird that is seen by the person you sponsor. After the Birdathon usually done on one day during the first week of May the person who you pledged to will contact you. The person will send you a description of their day and tell you how to complete your pledge. Only after the Birdathon do you send money to cover your pledge.

Organization	Plan for Grant
KY Natural Lands Trust, Inc.	KNLT is working to further expand the 3,101-acre Warbler Ridge Preserve on Pine Mountain that was established in 2020. The preserve is part of 9,000-acres of state and nonprofit conservation lands along the Harlan-Letcher County line.

Jefferson Memorial Forest	We would like to increase bird education by bringing in Raptor Rehab for six programs to provide educational programs to youth and families.
Josephine Sculpture Park	Funding will be used to conserve and restore habitats that are important to birds and provide ongoing bird-specific education to visitors of all ages.
The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky	Our team is in the process of restoring native species diversity within the Arboretum Woods, a 15-acre remnant Inner Bluegrass woodland, and we are seeking funding to help us accomplish these improvements.
Sunnyside Master Gardeners Bluebird Team	We plan to construct boxes and trails for Eastern Bluebirds and many others. The grant will be used for materials for boxes, trail development and educational materials.
KY Resources Council	KYRC requests support for its Environmental and Community Defense program in Fiscal Year 2023-2024. We will continue to advocate for wildlife and bird conservation as part of our legal work, as those issues arise.
Kentucky Conservation Committee	We are continuing to work on public education and policies relating to species and habitat protection, our advocacy work on migration corridors and how they work alongside good transportation planning, as well as continuing our work to preserve the agency funding for Kentucky's Heritage Land Conservation Fund.
Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve	We are developing a new traveling educational program. This grant would provide funding to develop two traveling birding programs to be given in a classroom setting. The other aspect of this grant request is, to replace three bird feeders in the bird blind at the Nature Center, and to purchase a years' worth of quality seed and suet.
Louisville Nature Center	The request this year is for funding to help feed the birds with both seed and native plants, and to keep the birds safe from window collisions. We will be making and installing new Acopian Bird Savers, as well as leading participants in a free workshop where they will make their own to take home and install.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE BBC BOARD

The Beckham Bird Club board has been asked some questions about how the annual dinner is funded. We will answer them in this message, but we also will take this opportunity to explain the club budget to those who might not be familiar with it, particularly new members.

With respect to the annual dinner:

1. It does not serve as a fundraiser for the club. The \$45 per person charge does not recover the full per-person cost of the dinner meal and service. The club makes up the difference – which this year came to several hundred dollars total - from general funds, which are largely generated through annual membership dues.
2. General funds also pay for other items associated with the dinner itself, such as the set-up fee for the cash bar.
3. The club also uses general funds to pay for the speaker, including an honorarium, reimbursement of travel expenses and two night's lodging in Louisville. If you have attended a dinner, you know that our speakers provide both knowledge and inspiration about birds, nature and conservation.

With respect to the club budget in general:

The operations of the BBC are funded largely by your membership dues. Additional funds come via donations and memorial gifts.

Club general funds are used for expenditures that serve the members directly; we have upgraded audiovisual equipment for club meetings, for example. The general fund is also used to pay operational expenses, including rental for our monthly meeting venue, any speaker honoraria, website fees, post office box, insurance, the cost of the annual picnic, etc.

However, the bulk of the cash flowing through club accounts – between \$20,000 and \$25,000 in recent years - is in connection with the annual Birdathon, which raises funds for various conservation and habitat preservation efforts in Kentucky and Indiana. The funds raised are deposited into the club account, accounted for separately from general funds, and thereafter disbursed to groups that have applied for and been approved for Birdathon grants. A description of the various recent or current projects can be found on the BBC website at <http://www.beckhambirdclub.org/birdathon.html>.

In recent years, when the funds donated through Birdathon have not been enough to fully fund grant requests, the BBC board has allocated additional sums from the club's general accounts to make up part or all of the difference. Last year, for example, additional funds were provided to Raptor Rehab of Kentucky in order to grant the organization a total of \$3,000.

Beyond Birdathon grant requests, the club also allocates separate funding from time to time to other organizations, such as the Louisville Nature Center and Parklands of Floyds Fork.

Years of careful and thoughtful stewardship of the club's resources have placed the BBC on sound financial footing, with cash reserves that the board believes are adequate to meet any unexpected needs. Because the BBC is financially healthy, the board is exploring ways to use our available resources in a prudent way to provide ongoing financial support to organizations in our community that support habitat conservation and outdoor education.

Rest assured that the board's priority is to maintain financial stability in order to continue to provide quality programming for our members through monthly meetings and other

events and to be able to communicate effectively about field trip opportunities, conservation matters and birds and birding.

We hope this explanation has been helpful. If you have any questions or have suggestions for how the club can reach out more effectively to its members or our community, please contact one of us.

A final and very important note: The Beckham Bird Club has been led for many years by a small group of volunteers who organize programming and events, administer the Birdathon grants and dedicate a great deal of time and effort to make the club a success and well positioned for the future. In recent years, the veteran members of the board have worked to begin a transition into a new generation of leadership for the club. While we have made progress, the BBC always needs more volunteers and fresh ideas. If you want to help by becoming a Birdathon birder/fundraiser, a field trip leader, a committee chair, a club officer, or just a more active member in some capacity, please step forward and let us know.

We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you,

The Beckham Bird Club Board.

Director: Karen Bonsell

President: Andrew Melnykovych

Director: Pam Spaulding

Vice President: Carol Besse

Director: Donovan Jones

Treasurer: Steve Brown

Director: Rev. Lee Payne

Secretary: Meg Brown

Past President: Jamie Baker

Treasurer: Steve Brown

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Our annual dinner meeting was a big success with over 100 members and guests in attendance at Big Spring Country Club. Derick Lovitch gave an informative talk on how to become a better birder by taking a keener look at birds even in small plots of ground. The club wants to give out a big thank you to those members who made it all possible – Carol Besse , who arranged our speaker, Jane Bell, the contact person for Big Spring and reservations, the telephone committee, Pam Spaulding, Meg Brown and Pat Bell, who called to remind you about making reservations. Steve Brown who did a great job putting the Directory together. Again **THANK YOU!!**

GLOBAL BIG DAY IS MAY 14

The annual birding extravaganza is fast approaching. On May 14, birders around the globe will participate in the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's effort to record as many species as possible in 24 hours.

The Beckham Bird Club has been coordinating the effort in Jefferson County since 2017, engaging in a friendly rivalry with the folks in Fayette County.

More details will be forthcoming in the May newsletter, but we know this much:

We are going to need birders in every capacity, from listening for nightjars and owls at dawn and dusk to scouring the best hotspots in the county to hiking into the hills in search of elusive species (Worm-eating Warblers at Jefferson Forest, for example). You can put in as little time as you wish (tick your local Mississippi Kites) or spend all day.

The official tally will be kept via eBird, so it is vitally important that **all Global Big Day observations are entered as eBird checklists.**

The May newsletter will have more information on how to participate if you want to help cover the best birding spots in the county. For now, just mark the date: MAY 14.

