

Arkansas Audubon Society Virtual Fall Meeting

Saturday, October 24, 2020 via Zoom

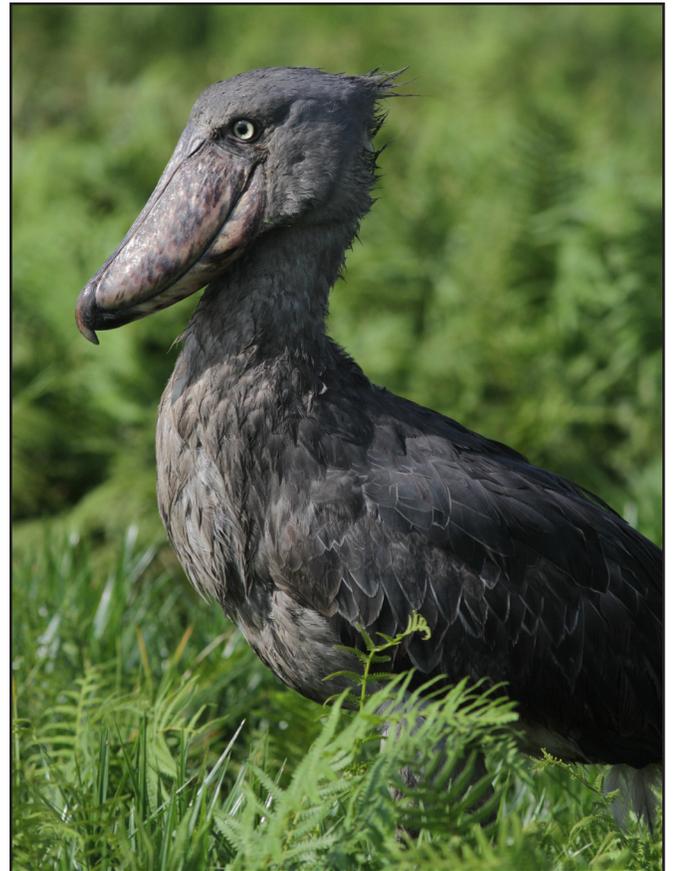


Evening Presentation (7 p.m.) Monotypic Bird Families of the World

Is the Shoebill the most bizarre bird in the world? Possibly so, it is definitely one of the most iconic monotypic bird families, in other words, a bird that defies simple classification and cannot be subsumed with other groups. An older common name for this unique species, the Whale-headed Stork, reveals an attempt to label it as something more familiar, but it isn't a stork and appears to be most closely related to pelicans.

Yet, as strange as the Shoebill is, it is not the only oddity out there. Currently, between 20 to 33 monotypic families are recognized. Those numbers are in flux as classification changes and monotypic species are split, for example the ostrich losing its monotypic status when Common Ostrich was split into two species, Common and Somali. Despite the splits, changes, and rearrangements, there are plenty of peculiar bird species that represent the sole survivors of their evolutionary lineage, some more obvious than others.

This presentation will span the globe and bounce around the canopy of the phylogenetic tree like a startled Hoatzin in order to introduce more than two dozen of these monotypic families.



Special Guest Speaker: Stephan Lorenz

Stephan is a tour leader for domestic and international tours for Rockjumper Birding Tours and High Lonesome Bird Tours, having guided more than 60 trips on five continents. When not out in the field birding, he writes about birds and sorts bird photos. He has written for *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *ABA's Birder's Guide*, *Bird Watching Magazine*, *Texas Birds*, *Neotropical Birding*, and *Wild Bird Magazine*. He has also authored several scientific publications on bird distribution and natural history. His photos have appeared in *Birding*, *Birder's Guide*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Bird Watching*, and *Living Bird*.