



Arkansas Birds

Newsletter of the Arkansas Audubon Society

Winter 2022 | Volume 67 | No. 3

Full-color newsletter available at <https://arbirds.org/AAS/Newsletter.aspx>

Bird-Friendly Yard Report

By PAM and JACK STEWART

AAS Members

“How do I start a native garden?” This is a question often asked of our Bird Friendly Yard committee. Jessica and Andrew Rowe have recently received an Arkansas Audubon Society Bird Friendly Yard certification. They sent photos and comments which answer that question “how” very well. This article includes sample photos and an excerpted description of the first years since starting their garden.

“Our journey began the fall of 2020 when I decided I wanted to grow bird food rather than buy it, so I consulted with a friend and we got started,” Jessica explained. “Step 1 - Kill the grass with no pesticides. We laid the plastic”. (Plastic kills by solarization. Sunlight passes through the plastic and traps the heat. Soil reaches temperatures lethal to soil pests and weeds.)

Spring 2021



Plastic laid down last autumn has been removed from half the garden space. Pre-rooted shrubs and perennials are being planted.

Newly Certified Yards:

(By County)

Benton

Andrew and Jessica Rowe

Carroll

Steve and Linda Rogers

Faulkner

Glen Shaw

Garland

Royal Blueberry Farm (Melanie Zimmer)

Johnson

Phyllis Cron

Lonoke

Susan Schulte

Pope

All Saints Episcopal Church (Catherine Crews)

Pulaski

St. Margaret's Episcopal Church (Bev Eckert)

Late Summer 2021



Note the logs and rocks used to delineate the natural area from lawn. This gives the native area a neater and purposeful look.

Newsletter and Membership Information

The Arkansas Audubon Society Newsletter is a quarterly publication of Arkansas Audubon Society Inc., a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization, 472 Rock Creek Rd., Hot Springs, AR 71913-9261. Issue dates are March, June, September, and December. The newsletter is provided to those who pay membership dues to AAS.

PLEASE NOTE: Announcements, articles, information, and/or photographs to be considered for an upcoming edition of *Arkansas Birds* should be submitted to the editor no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication. Please send newsletter submissions to emilyrdonahue@gmail.com.

Membership renewals are due January 1st of each calendar year.

REGULAR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS	Jan – Sept*	Oct – Dec**
Regular member	\$15.00	\$15.00
Regular Family	\$20.00	\$20.00
Contributing Member	\$30.00	--
Contributing Family	\$35.00	--
Sustaining Member	\$20.00	--
Sustaining Family	\$25.00	--
Student member	\$5.00	--

* Memberships paid in this quarter will cover membership through the end (Dec) of that year

** Memberships paid during this period (Oct – Dec) will include full membership for the following calendar year

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS

Life Member (may be paid over a two-year period)	\$250.00
Patron of Arkansas Audubon Society	\$500.00

Payment of Dues:

Members have two options for payment:

- 1) Online credit card or PayPal payment through account created on the AAS website: <https://arbirds.org>
- 2) Check made to Arkansas Audubon Society and sent to:

Arkansas Audubon Society, P. O. Box 241421, Little Rock, AR 72223

Summer 2022



More views of Jessica and Andrew's garden during the second summer. Mullein was allowed to take hold in the garden to temporarily inhibit grasses and smaller weeds.

Jessica explained that many invasive, non-native mullein plants appeared, but were allowed to grow the first year since they prevented lawn grass and smaller weeds which were difficult to remove. The mullein was eventually removed and, after mulching with fallen autumn leaves, used to prevent the grass from returning. It required some experimenting to find which leaves were best; oak leaves, which are stiff, tended to blow around but could be held down by other leaves. Plant stems and seed heads were left standing for birds to use as shelter and food.

Winter 2022



The garden in winter.

We have received many good native garden photos, but this set by Jessica and Andrew demonstrates how a native garden can get started and progress over time. As the trees and shrubs get taller to form varying vertical layers of shelter more birds will be attracted.

Thank you, Jessica and Andrew.

Distribution and Abundance of Arkansas Birds

The Summer Season
1 June – 31 July 2022

By LYNDAL YORK
AAS Curator

A **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, rare for the Ozarks, was seen near Alpena, Carroll Co 7 Jun (Shelle Patterson).

Two **Inca Doves** were at Monticello, Drew Co 4 Jul (Robert Wojohn). This was just the second record for the county.

White-winged Doves continue to spread across the state as singles were reported at: the Alma WTP, Crawford Co 18 Jul (Joanie Paterson, Donald Ouellette); Wilton, Little River Co 10 Jul (Shirley Mills); N. Little Rock, Pulaski Co 2 Jul (Dauphne Trenholm).

A very rare **Mexican Violetear** spent the period of 11 Jul -17 Jul at a residence on CR 102, Eureka Springs, Carroll Co (Joe Neal; Judy Griffith; Vivek Govind Kumar; Laura and Kevin Wood). This is the 8th record for this species in the state.

Limpkins have invaded the state this year. There was one record in 2021, three in May 2022, and 10 birds this summer. During the summer season, three birds were the first to appear in the Little River Bottoms IBA, Hempstead Co 1 Jun (Cody Massery, Charles Mills, Allan Mueller) followed by four birds at the same site, 20 Jun (Charles Mills, Quin & Michele Warsaw, and Justin Pendley). The remaining single birds were observed at the following locations: Millwood Lake, Hempstead Co 20 Jun (Timothy White); Bald Knob NWR, White Co 16 Jul (Ken Graves, Dawna Stirrup and Kristi Bond); Dr. Lester Sitzes III Bois d'Arc WMA, 28 Jul (Julie McCaghey).

Two rare fall migrating **Piping Plovers** were found at Darrell Saul Minnow Farm – West Unit, Prairie Co 28 Jul and three on 30 Jul (Kenny & LaDonna Nichols).



*Piping Plover | Darrell Saul Minnow Farm,
Prairie Co. | Photo by Michael Linz*

A molting adult **Sanderling**, which is an uncommon fall migrant, was at Darrell Saul Minnow Farm – West Unit, Prairie Co 24 Jul (KN & LaN) and four more were seen at the same location 28 & 30 Jul (KN & LaN).

that range of low hills there? A Whiskered Screech-Owl was seen 3 days ago'. We would go to that exact spot and sure enough, see the bird. And on and on nonstop. He never tired or slackened. He was actually working on MY life list and helped me get over 30 new species. We enjoyed glorious spring-like weather when the rest of the nation was reeling in miserable polar conditions, and got 181 species, including 10 species of woodpeckers, 6 hummingbirds, 7 wrens, 5 thrashers, 9 flycatchers and over 20 sparrow species. See <https://ebird.org/tripreport/95886> for more details."

Congratulations to **Sandy Berger**, who submitted an eBird checklist every day in 2022. 365 days plus. Sandy said, "It was kind of fun. Many days it was just a count done in my yard. But it made me always look for that unusual backyard sighting, like the Cooper's Hawk in my birdbath. Then there was the Brown Creeper and Red-breasted Nuthatch that hung around a few days. Doing a daily count also got me out of the house during the drought earlier this year, which was really good. Will I do it again? Maybe. I dunno."

While there are others around the state who submit a checklist daily, this was Sandy's first time doing so.

Karen Holliday and **Becky Wheeler** spent three weeks in November bird watching in the Sabah area of northern Borneo. Borneo is the third largest island in the world and straddles the equator in the Malaysia region.

By the end of the trip the group had seen 290 species of birds. Highlights were the iconic Bornean Bristlehead, Storm's Storks, soaring Lesser Adjutants, Kinabalu Serpent-Eagle Mountain Serpent Eagle), Buffy Fish-Owl, Whitehead's Trogon, plus several hornbill species including the spectacular Rhinoceros Hornbill.

The trip wasn't just about birds. Top of the list was to see wild orangutans. The group saw several, including a large male who chased our group out of his territory! Other primates were the odd-looking proboscis monkeys with their weird noses, Pig-tailed and Long-tail (crab-eating) Macaques, the rare Bornean Colugo, plus Giant Red Flying Squirrels, Leopard Cats, Slow Loris, and a Bornean Keeled Green Pit Viper.

The Bornean people were so friendly and excited to share their country and customs. One driver took great delight in teaching Karen Bornean words. Since he was descended from one of their headhunter tribes, she worked hard to enunciate everything correctly so as not to offend him!

Highlights included spectacular sunsets over the South China Sea, seeing the huge Rafflesia plant in bloom, peering through fog to find birds on Mount Kinabalu, pulling leeches off various body parts after hikes through the rainforest, and night river cruises looking for nocturnal animals and birds. Exotic Borneo should be added to everyone's list of places to visit!

Kenny and **LaDonna Nichols** discovered a Short-billed Gull below the dam at Dardanelle on December 29, 2022. Over the next few days, they helped several others add this rare visitor to their state/life list. No easy task as the gull was mixed in with thousands of Ring-billed Gulls.

Birding Southern Mexico -- Chiapas, Oaxaca and Veracruz

By **PATTY MCLEAN**

*Joining friends from Georgia, **Michael** and **Patty McLean** took a November 2022 birding trip to Mexico under the leadership of **Kim Risen**, owner of **NatureScape Tours**. Here's their story.*

We enjoyed the birds, the mountains and the people from Chiapas through Oaxaca to Veracruz, crossing the isthmus of Mexico from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. In addition to endemic birds and other regional specialties, we were looking forward to trying the local food, particularly in Oaxaca. We weren't sure what to expect (tacos, burritos – or something more exotic?), and the food varied within each region. Some of the top agricultural products are chocolate, avocados, and shade grown coffee – and we enjoyed all of them almost every day, primarily in the form of mole, guacamole, and fresh-ground coffee. Other memorable foods included fresh caught Red Snapper cooked on an open oven while enjoying the Pacific Ocean overlooking a large rock with numerous Blue-footed Boobies enjoying their day.

The beauty of this region is indescribable with ocean, mountains, and lowlands crossing through rain forests, cloud forests, and Gulf Coast flatlands, and the people are warm and friendly...and very hard working even under difficult conditions.

Besides the beauty of the land, we were delighted by the sights and sounds of birds, particularly the endemics with one being our favorite-ever warbler – the Red Warbler. We were fortunate to see this handsome species in several areas throughout the mountains.

And, of course, you can't go to Mexico without looking for Trogons, and we got good looks at several – the Mountain Trogon, Citreoline Trogon, Gartered Trogon, and the Collared Trogon.

No trip to Mexico would be complete without seeing dozens of Hummingbirds, and we were treated to an amazing variety. November is a good time for hummingbirds in Mexico because it's when their favorite flowers are in bloom, making them easier to find. Some of our favorites included the Azure-crowned, Beautiful, Bumblebee (tiny), Blue-capped, Turquoise-capped, and the Golden-crowned Emerald. There were many more.

Wrens in Mexico go from being very elusive, small and skulky to large, familial, and highly visible. Some of our favorites included Nava's Wren, a reclusive wren with a beautiful song and only found in limited habitats; Giant Wren, a highly active and inviting wren that lives in family groups and was eager for us to join their party; Happy Wren, a charming but skulky wren with a delightful song; and Band-backed Wren, a large and noisy wren with a vibrant gray and white pattern across its back. We also heard Spotted Wrens at every stop singing their lovely song echoing throughout the mountain areas.

While every stop gave us something new and spectacular, there was great debate on which of the Bunting species was our favorite. Most folks chose the Rose-bellied Bunting, the male giving us a beautiful look at his rosy belly, particularly lovely as it glowed in the morning sun. But my favorite was the Orange-breasted Bunting with the orange belly dancing off the blue upperparts and a green face and eye ring. What a grand creation!

Many other endemics stood out and included various tanagers, flycatchers, motmots, owls, vireos and vireo-shrikes, brush-finches, nightingale-thrushes, woodpeckers and woodcreepers, solitaires, and sparrows. We also encountered numerous species that breed or visit the U.S. including many warblers and flycatchers that pass through Arkansas. So many birds it would take a long article to cover them all. In the end we tallied 379 species in two weeks, of which 121 were lifers!



Bumblebee Hummingbird | World's second smallest bird | Photo by Michael Linz

Arkansas Birding Hotspots

There is a new opportunity to contribute to our birding community!

Introducing the Arkansas Birding Hotspots website:

<https://birdinghotspots.org/us/arkansas>

This platform allows birders to submit photos of a hotspot or to offer tips for birding, birds of interest, or notable trails. Every eBird hotspot has a page. On each page you will find links to "Upload Photos" or "Suggest Edit." Where do you park? Is there a good time of the year to visit? Is there a trail, pond, or other area you would recommend? Is it helpful to carry a scope? Are there safety concerns? If access is restricted, who do you ask for permission? Help birders know where to go and what to expect when they visit. Even if a hotspot has information, we welcome edits, updates, and better photos. Click Find Hotspots on the homepage for a search menu.

The handful of other states that have birding hotspot platforms have seen thousands of visitors to their pages. This is a boon for our state's avitourism, as well as our fellow Arkansans. Like Wikipedia, the more our birding community contributes, the more useful this site will be for us all. All submissions are reviewed by an editor before being made public.

The volunteer editorial team has kicked things off with full accounts of some of the hottest hotspots, plus basic info for every state park, WMA, NWR, natural area, Corps lake, and more.

Examples:

- Bald Knob NWR
<https://birdinghotspots.org/hotspot/L218758>
- Stuttgart Municipal Airport
<https://birdinghotspots.org/hotspot/L127211>
- Woolsey Wet Prairie
<https://birdinghotspots.org/hotspot/L502940>

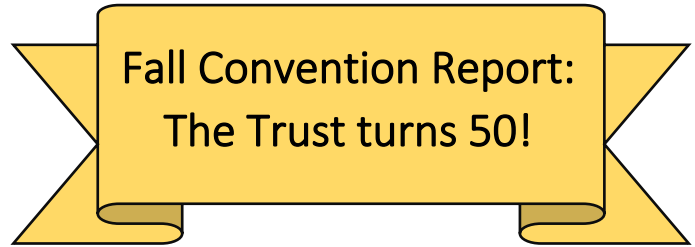
Tips for submissions:

- Consider what would be most helpful for a visiting birder to know.
- Add only what you know; most fields are optional.
- Write in third person, e.g. This site is best visited in spring. NOT I prefer to visit this site in spring.
- Add a link for the "official" webpage about the location, if applicable.
- Capitalize bird names just as they appear in field guides.
- Photos should feature habitats and show what the location looks like. Birds can be in the photos but are not the focus of photos.
- Remove watermarks from photos. All photos are released into the public domain unless otherwise noted. For copyright add © before your name in the credit "By ..." line.

We look forward to seeing this website grow.

The Editors,

Sandy Berger, Betty Evans, Patty McLean, Devin Moon, Allan Mueller, Ariana Remmel, and Dan Scheiman



By DAN SCHEIMAN

AAS Trust Chair

Our fall meeting was held on October 14-15 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Little Rock. As you no doubt already know, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the AAS Trust, which gives grants to research, conservation, and education projects. All of our speakers were past grantees who expressed what our financial support meant to them. As the Trust Chair, I kicked off our Saturday afternoon symposium with a brief history of the Trust. I summarized how Trust grants have been allocated over 50 years, touched on conservation outcomes from funded projects, and demonstrated how grantees have gone on to careers in science, conservation, and education, thanks in some small part to Trust support. Lastly, I announced the 50th anniversary donation challenge; donate to the Trust in multiples of \$50 (or \$5.0) at <https://arbirds.org/Trust/Support.aspx>.

I was followed by three recent grantees who presented their research results. Jackson Holstead, an undergraduate at Southern Arkansas University, was awarded a grant in 2021 to study alligator nesting. Sam Little is getting her M.S. at UCA. A grant in 2021 supported her research on how to more effectively control sweetgums with fire. Katie Ceynar came all the way from Denton, TX, where she is working on her M.S. at University of North Texas. A grant in 2020 allowed her to track Painted Buntings. VP Lynn Foster (not a grantee, but still a great investment for our Society) closed with our new involvement in Lights Out Heartland, a regional movement to reduce light pollution and bird deaths.

Our Friday night speaker was Dana Ripper. When she was a M.S. student at A-State, she received Trust grants in 2000 and 2001 for her research on Hairy Woodpeckers. Now she's co-director/founder of the Missouri River Bird Observatory. She presented on bird conservation in the 21st century. She touched on how conservationists are turning to technology such as Motus tracking systems to help us better protect birds. She also emphasized the value of educating people, which her organization does.

On Saturday night, Dr. Chuck Preston, also emphasized the importance of communicating science to engage people in conservation. He was conducting research on Red-tailed Hawks for his M.S. at UA-Fayetteville when he received a Trust grant in 1977. Now he's a nationally renowned (and almost-retired) research scientist and educator at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. He presented his ongoing research and conservation efforts on Golden Eagles in the threatened sagebrush habitat of Wyoming.

The birding was slow at Bell Slough WMA, Camp Robinson SUA, Lake Maumelle, the Little Rock Audubon Center, and points in between. Many newly arrived winter residents were seen, like kinglets and sparrows, plus a few migrants like Rose-breasted Grosbeak, American Redstart, and Magnolia Warbler. One highlight was a Clay-colored Sparrow briefly seen by Matt Janson. The bird of the weekend was a Say's Phoebe at Cook's Landing, which was still there Sunday morning. We collectively tallied 90 species.

AAS Trust Donations

(September 11, 2022- February 6, 2023)

Endowment-Memorial Fund

Maury and Barbara Baker
 Vickie Becker
 Ronald and Christine Cash
 Lynn Christie
 Jane Dunn
 Megan Foil
 Heath Garner
 Ann Gordon
 Geneva Green
 Susan Gustafson
 Barry Haas

Keith and Rayma Jean Hawkins
 Dr. Frances James
 Ronald Kew
 Christine Lamb in honor of Cheryl Fahey
 Susan Leslie
 Susan McNutt
 Carolyn Minson
 Mary Joe Morris
 Dr. Carol Patterson
 Leslie Peacock in memory of Stuart Lance Peacock
 Lance Runion
 Dan and Samantha Schieman
 Dr. Donna Shipley
 Peggy Smith
 Alexander Worm in honor of future students
 Hot Springs Village Audubon Society

Endowment-Memorial Fund: Dr. Kannan's Trip

Lynn Christie
 Jane Dunn
 Geneva Green
 Susan Gustafson
 Susan Leslie
 Mary Joe Morris
 Dr. Donna Shipley

Max Parker Fund

Joseph Parker in memory of Max and John Parker
 Mrs. Leslie Parker in memory of Max and John Parker

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Fund

Lynn Risser in honor of Dave Kuhne

Research-Educational Fund

Patricia McClean



OUR MISSION

To inspire Arkansans to care about birds and their habitats, the threats they face, and their connections to us.

OUR CORE VALUES

Conservation: to protect Arkansas birds and their habitats

Education: to increase knowledge and appreciation of birds and their environments

Fellowship: to enjoy birds and each other's company

Diversity and Inclusivity: to promote diversity within our membership, leadership, and programming

OUR ACTIONS

Conservation: We promote the conservation of birds and their habitats through advocating to decision-makers, funding research and conservation projects, certifying bird-friendly properties, and connecting people to the joys of birding.

Education: We educate members and the broader community through our meetings and convention programming, the Arkansas Bird Records Database, the ARBIRD-L Discussion List, Arkansas Hotspots webpage, the Halberg Ecology Camp, scholarship awards, and research produced through grants from the AAS Trust.

Fellowship: We cultivate community by bringing birders and other wildlife enthusiasts together during our statewide conventions and field trips, and through our quarterly newsletter, the AAS website, online discussions providing support to new and existing members, and our social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Diversity/Inclusivity: We promote inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility across our membership, leadership, and programming. Protecting and conserving nature takes all of us, regardless of our cultural, social, political, or other differences, to preserve the diversity of the natural world so that future generations may enjoy it too.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Become an active member and invite friends and family to join
- Volunteer for and participate in special projects including leading or organizing field trips for your area, participating in bird surveys and CBCs, and providing assistance during our conventions
- Volunteer time to our leadership team and/or Board and help grow our organization's talents

- Donate to the AAS Trust, the Arkansas Audubon Society, and/or Audubon Delta
- Support our research efforts by helping us expand the audience on critical issues facing birds and their habitats
- Protect birds by preventing bird window collisions and harm from outdoor cats, advocating for Lights Out during migration, cultivating native plants, and certifying your yard or other properties as "Bird-Friendly"

Halberg Ecology Camps: Never too Late to Donate

By Barry Haas

Ecology Camp Treasurer

The Arkansas Audubon Society Halberg Ecology Camp held its first session in June 2022 after two years of cancellations due to Covid. Our plan this year is to hold two sessions at Camp Clearfork in June including both first- and second-year campers. We will not learn until early March if our requested camp dates have been approved by the U.S. Forest Service. Assuming that happens, we will begin recruiting first-year campers for the two June camp sessions at that time.

Last year's single camp session was for first-year campers only since we had no campers to invite back for a second year of study from the two previous years.

In November we sent out the Halberg Ecology Camp's first Fall Appeal in three years. We sent e-mails to all Arkansas Audubon Society members and letters to past donors. But the effort was not as inclusive as in years past. If you did not have a chance to make a Fall Appeal donation already, we would still welcome you to do so.

We welcome all donations that help educate Arkansas youth about the wonders and joys of the natural world in the Halberg Ecology Camp's hands-on learning environment. You can make donations online at the Arkansas Audubon Society website 'arbirds.org' or send a check made payable to "**AAS Halberg Ecology Camp**" or "**Arkansas Audubon Society**" to **P.O. Box 242088, Little Rock, AR 72223**.

Please note: to complete the donation you must complete your method of payment via either Paypal or credit card AFTER it appears you have completed the process. If you didn't choose a payment method and complete that information (for example, your credit card number or log in to PayPal), your donation has not been completed even though you will receive an e-mail confirmation.

All donations are tax deductible, and are acknowledged by letter or e-mail (e-mail when possible to save on postage).

Ecology Camp Donations

(September 11, 2022 – January 20, 2023)

Fall Appeal

Maury & Barbara Baker
John Calhoun
Rob & Lasa Doster
Dr. Shirley Ann Gilmore
Susan Hardin & Barry Haas
Willa Harkey
Keith & Rayma Hawkins
Lee Abel & Eleanor Kennedy
Joan Lipsmeyer
Jana McGregor
Dottie Patterson
Ed & Sil Pembleton
Michael Reed
Ed Laster & Mark Roark
Cathy & Bob Ross
Dan & Samantha Scheiman
Dr. John Simpson
Audrey & Dick Velnetske

Fall Appeal (Parents & Grandparents)

Fred Berry
Ann Gordon
Allan & Kathleen Mueller
Eric & Milanne Sundell

Donations by Individuals

Ed & Cynthia Howington in memory of
Mack & Hervey Howington

Scholarships & Tuition Assistance

Richard McCormick

Memorials & Honoraria

Dawn Graves in honor of Terry & Judy Butler

AAS Spring Convention Details

By LYNN FOSTER

AAS Vice President

Mark your calendar for May 5 and 6 and plan to join us in Jonesboro for our spring convention! We're pleased to announce that documentary filmmaker Bob Dolgan will be showing his film, *The World of Monty and Rose*, about the piping plovers that conquered Chicago, on Saturday May 6. He has produced two documentaries on Monty and Rose, and this is the more recent and longer of the two. He is a past board member of the Chicago Ornithological Society and author of *This Week in Birding* (<https://www.twibchicago.com>), which is published weekly on Substack. His most recent film, *Fluddles* (<https://www.turnstoneimpact.com/fluddles.html>), is due out later this year. You can learn more about his work at www.turnstoneimpact.com. Our Friday speaker, Mike Slay, will be speaking about the biodiversity of the Blanchard Springs caverns and the Ozark karst ecosystem. Mike works for The Nature Conservancy; you can read more about him and his work at www.ozarksubterranea.com/mikeslay.

We're also hoping to hear from the folks who are planning a red wolf research center associated with A-State, which will house a population of red wolves. And Dr. Than Boves has offered to let AAS members accompany his students as they do their research in the field! More on that later.

Jack Stewart is planning a Saturday symposium with speakers, and of course we will offer the traditional silent auction and door prizes. It's not too early to be thinking about what you'd like to donate!

Registration for the spring convention will be open starting in February.

BirdAR Birdathon

By DAN SCHEIMAN

Birdathon Coordinator

Registration is now open for Audubon Delta's BirdAR Birdathon. Birdathons all over the country engage thousands of birders in raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for bird conservation. The BirdAR

Birdathon is a competitive search for birds plus a fun way to raise money for Audubon Delta's bird conservation and environmental education work in Arkansas.

Like last year, two team categories are available to provide everyone the opportunity to participate in a way that is safe and comfortable. Group Birdathon teams consist of two to five participants who will bird together anywhere in the state (\$250 fundraising minimum). Backyard Birdathon teams are an individual or household who bird from the comfort of their home (\$100 minimum). All teams have a full 24 hours on a date of your choosing between Saturday April 29 and Sunday May 21. BirdCast (<https://birdcast.info>) can help you pick a great day for migration. On Wednesday May 24, all teams are invited to join us for an evening virtual Bird Bash where teams will share experiences and announce prizes for Most Species (Group), Most Species (Backyard), and Most Money Raised. In addition, team members will receive a t-shirt, sticker, and car door magnet letting onlookers know you are a volunteer birder (also handy for CBCs, etc.)



Last year's Birdathon was a success, despite the coronavirus, thanks to Altogether the 12 teams tallied 192 species and raised over **\$7,400!**

Registration forms are at <http://ar.audubon.org/bird-ar>. The deadline is April 14. The sooner you register your team the sooner Audubon Arkansas will create your team's profile page to make fundraising easier, e.g. friends and family anywhere in the world can donate online.

I'm looking forward to competing with you for a good cause.

Bringing Nature to Your Yard

Save The Date

When: Saturday, April 22 10 am-1 pm
Where: Children's Library & Learning Center
 4800 W. 10th St., Little Rock



Last year, Dr. Dan Scheiman spoke on gardening for birds as part of CALS's Naturally Arkansas webinar series. This year, Naturally Arkansas is presenting an in-person event aimed at both beginners who are just starting out gardening with native plants and people who have already been doing so for a while.

Do you want to build a pollinator garden but don't know how to start? Or have you been working on your garden for a while and have questions about cultivars and companion plants? What should you be doing if you want more native bees in your garden? Where can you buy native plants in central Arkansas?

Expert speakers will address these and more topics! And in addition, local native plants sellers will be hand-selling native plants! And partners like the Arkansas Natural Sky Association and the Central Arkansas Master Naturalists will be staffing tables and distributing information about what their groups do.

What better way to spend Earth Day than by learning about bringing nature to your yard?

AAS will have a table. If you can volunteer to staff it and answer peoples' questions about membership, our bird-friendly yard program, birding, and AAS in general, please contact Lynn Foster at lfoster5211@gmail.com.

President's Column

By MEGAN FOLL
AAS President

In 2022 the board finished the process of drafting a new mission statement for the Arkansas Audubon Society, and we have posted the final draft in this newsletter. Some of the board's goals in creating this were to clearly show who we are and what we do and, in doing so, make ourselves more inviting to potential members. To reiterate, the AAS mission is "To inspire Arkansans to care about birds and their habitats, the threats they face, and their connections to us." An important part of this is "to inspire Arkansans," and I would say "to inspire new Arkansans." New to our Society, that is, and perhaps even new to appreciating nature and the conservation of it. New blood added to the Society is a vital thing not only for our continued existence, but for growing our talents and carrying out our mission and goals.

I'm appealing to our membership now in the hopes that one, or more, of you will think new members to be just as vital as I do and be willing to serve on the Membership Committee. One of the responsibilities of this committee is promotional activities to increase membership. This may take the form of working with the Publicity Committee for social media outreach, or it may take the form of in-person outreach at events such as the Dark Sky Festival on the Buffalo National River. If you are interested in these activities and this committee, or if you have any questions about the role(s), please reach out to me via email at auntm13@gmail.com.

Printed Newsletter Opt-out:

To opt out of receiving our printed version of the newsletter, please email your name and mailing address to Karen Seale at karenseale@aristotle.net