



# THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG

APRIL 2021

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

## **2021 Annual Meeting – IN PERSON!!**

The BBC board of directors met recently and decided to hold our regular annual meeting in May, with some significant changes that reflect the ongoing, though improving, situation with COVID19.

**The meeting will be held at 7 pm on Tuesday, May 11,** at the PWC Pavilion at Beckley Creek Park (the picnic shelter/restroom facility near the visitor center and across from the playground).

Social distancing will be observed and we strongly encourage everyone to wear masks unless you are addressing the group. We further encourage everyone to get vaccinated in advance of the meeting if you plan to attend.

This will be a business meeting only. Because we are meeting outdoors, we will not be having a program. As a further pandemic precaution, there will not be a hospitality time after the meeting.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU ATTEND THIS MEETING, AS WE WILL BE ELECTING OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS. THERE ALSO WILL BE A VOTE ON IMPORTANT BY-LAW AMENDMENTS. THOSE AMENDMENTS CANNOT BE ENACTED UNLESS A QUORUM OF MEMBERS – ABOUT 30 VOTING MEMBERS - IS PRESENT.

The slate of candidates for officer and director positions put forth by the BBC board's Nominating Committee is as follows:

President: Andrew Melnykovich, President

Vice-President: Carol Besse,

Treasurer: Judith McCandless

Secretary: Meg Brown

Director: Karen Bonsell

Director: Pam Spaulding

Jamie Baker will remain on the board as past-president. Joanne Luyster and Pat Bell have another year to serve as directors.

The BBC board also is proposing two additions to the by-laws. These are intended to codify the board's ability to institute electronic meeting and voting procedures, and to suspend regular club activities, if circumstances beyond the BBC's control make it unsafe or impossible to meet safely in person. Essentially, the by-law amendments formalize the steps the board was forced to take on an *ad hoc* basis when the COVID19 pandemic began a year ago.

The proposed by-law changes are as follow:

Amend Article V to add Section E, to read as follows:

In the event that circumstances beyond the corporation's control make it impossible or inadvisable to conduct the May Annual Meeting in person, the Executive Board may, by majority vote, determine that the meeting shall be conducted by electronic means. Such means may include, but are not limited to, video conferencing or conducting officer and director elections, as well as votes on other matters such as membership dues or by-law amendments, by a combination of electronic and postal mail. In the event that a meeting is conducted by electronic means, the provisions pertaining to advance notice of dues changes and by-law amendments shall remain in effect. The Executive Board shall adopt a procedure that permits nominations from the membership for officer or board positions.

Amend Article VIII, Section A to add:

In the event that circumstances beyond the control of the corporation make it impossible or unsafe to conduct meetings, the Executive Board may, upon a vote of the majority of its members, suspend meetings, including the Annual Meeting in May, or other activities of the corporation, until such time as it votes that a resumption is possible.

#### **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION - HOW TO JOIN**

To join the Beckham Bird Club, visit our website <http://www.beckhambirdclub.org/> and click on the membership tab at the top of the homepage. The membership fees are: regular \$15, family \$20, contributing \$30, student \$10 and life \$500. Mail to P.O. Box 5301, Louisville, KY 40255-0301. **If you use Pay Pal don't forget to send an email to the club with name, address, phone numbers and email so the club can update the membership list.**

**WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW MEMBERS.**

## **FIELD TRIPS? YES – IN SEPTEMBER**

## **REGULAR MEETINGS? – NOT YET**

## **ANNUAL DINNER? – WAIT UNTIL NEXT YEAR**

It's too soon to declare the COVID19 pandemic over, but things are getting better. Therefore, the BBC board has decided to move – slowly and carefully – toward a resumption of regular club activities.

We will begin with field trips in September. There will, however, be some restrictions. Trips will be limited to 12 participants, including leaders. Advance registration with the leader will be required. We will provide more details in the summer, as we get a better sense of what the state of coronavirus transmission will be in the fall.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church has not yet announced when its building will reopen, which means that we do not know when the BBC will regain access to our regular meeting facility. We are hoping for the fall, but it may well be 2022 before we are back to regular programming.

The BBC board decided at its March meeting that it will not be possible to have an annual dinner this year. We had considered moving this year's dinner to the fall, but with the continuing uncertainty over the safety of indoor activities, the prudent course of action is to wait until March of 2022. The board is working on booking an exciting speaker for that date.

The BBC board appreciates the patience of BBC members as we all try to navigate through these trying times. On the bright side, interest in birds and birding has grown greatly during the pandemic, and we are seeing many new members joining the BBC.

We look forward to seeing all members – old and new – as soon as things get back to normal.

For the BBC board,

Andrew Melnykovych



### **KOS NEWS**

The SPRING 2021 KOS Meeting at Mammoth Cave N.P., April 23 - 25 has been cancelled due to COVID considerations. KOS is hosting bird hikes around the state during the weekend of April 23 - 25, 2021. Check [birdky.org](http://birdky.org) for more info.

An online virtual meeting will be held during the first weekend in June, 2021.

The fall KOS meeting is set to take place at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park during the weekend of September 17 - 19, 2021.



## **GLOBAL BIG DAY – MAY 8**

IT'S ON!

Global Big Day and the annual friendly competition between Jefferson County and Fayette County for who can record the most species in the course of the day.

After six Global Big Days, it's all tied up at three victories each. Jefferson County won the first three rounds by decisive margins, while Fayette County eked out narrow wins (160-157 and 152-150) in 2018 and 2019 before stretching the margin to 148-141 last year.

So, this is a pivotal year – it will break the tie and could (nay, should) end the Fayette County winning streak.

It works like this:

1. Go out and bird for as long as you can – dawn to dusk, if possible.
2. Record your sightings in eBird.
3. eBird does the hard work of tallying the totals.
4. Most species wins.

In order to optimize our odds of winning, it is important to cover all of the best birding spots in the county. And better still to have them covered by those who know them best.

So, if there is a particular spot that you bird regularly, please let me (Andrew Melnykovich – [estiles74@gmail.com](mailto:estiles74@gmail.com)) know that you will be there on Global Big Day. By late April, I should have a good idea of who will be birding where, and can set about plugging any holes in the map.

You don't have to be an experienced or expert birder to contribute. Just be sure you record everything in eBird.

I look forward to hearing from many of you in the coming weeks. If I don't, you may well be hearing from me instead.

Thanks,

Andrew Melnykovich

## 2021 Birdathon

With this year slowly getting back to normal BBC is also going to have its annual Birdathon as we have done in the past. Many of our birding spots were closed last year but this year we should have no problems accessing these areas. So, we can say we are back in business but of course we need your help to make it successful. We will be asking you to help support the different organizations that have asked for grants that help birds.

You will be contacted to give to this year's Birdathon. You will be asked to make a pledge. This pledge can be done in two ways – pledging an amount for every bird seen or a set amount. After the Birdathon which will be held in May you will be contacted by the person you made your pledge to. That person will send you a description of their day of birding and how to send in your pledge. Should you not be contacted we hope you will still contribute to our Birdathon by either 1) making a check out to **Beckham Bird Club** and please indicate on your check 2021 Birdathon and mail to Beckham Bird Club, PO Box 5301, Louisville, KY 40255-0301 or 2) use PayPal at [beckhambirdclub.org](http://beckhambirdclub.org) and click on activities or membership. You can also use your credit card at the PayPal site.

Since the pandemic many organizations requesting grants are not running as smoothly as they would like and have not fully recovered all their operations. One of the provisions of receiving a grant from BBC is that each organization is required to send in a form explaining how they used the money. Some have not done so yet and the board has given them extensions to get their form in this month. Failing to do so the organization will be denied a grant. Below are the organizations that the BBC board approved for grants this year from the money collected but some of them are provisional until BBC receives the form regarding usage of their 2020 grant. Some of these organizations are requesting a grant for the first time or maybe have done so in the past but not last year. Therefore, they have been approved since they are not required to send in the form.

Organization	Plan for Grant
KY Natural Lands Trust, Inc.	KNLT is continuing its mission to protect, connect and restore wildlands. The primary focus remains on the Pine Mountain Wildlands Corridor, a 125-mile mountain, a geography of unique biodiversity and high landscape resilience. KNLT is also working on an expansion to the Warbler Ridge Preserve. The newest tract will add an additional 300+ acres of contiguous forest that is known to be summer and swarming habitat for the endangered Indiana and Northern Long-eared bats.
Jefferson Memorial Forest	We are promoting bird education in our ECHO (Engaging Children Outdoors) program at one of our partner community centers, converting a grassy area to native plants with two bird feeders that will increase excitement and teach children about native birds and how they can participate in citizen science to help the conservation of birds. We also hope to introduce the benefit of native plant species. \$1,000 will go toward Native plants, and \$200 toward feeder, a pole system, and window alert bird stickers.
Josephine Sculpture Park (A nonprofit organization and 30-acre park, with	The funds will be used in three main areas. 1. Invasive plant removal: maintenance of native wildflower and grass meadows; maintenance of tree planting sites. This creates a haven and

<p>over 60 public art installations among mowed walking paths and native KY habitat.)</p>	<p>critical habitat for nesting, overwintering, and migrating birds in a region of Franklin Co. As well as more food and habitat sources for birds and other wildlife.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Bird Education. Educational materials for bird-specific habitat sites, programs and tours. Subsidize the cost of bird-related environmental education programs to help reduce cost of registration, increasing access and equity during an unprecedented and difficult financial time due to Covid-19. The education programs will be conducted by certified professional environmental educator, using curriculum inspired by Project Wild and Flying Wild.</li> <li>3. Bluebird trail maintenance and volunteer management. Maintenance of boxes and hardware as needed; supplies and materials for monitoring &amp; volunteer management (staff time &amp; training supplies).</li> </ol>
<p>Surry Hills Nature Preserve, Inc.</p>	<p>Grant will be used to expand the amount of land that can be permanently placed in green space by purchasing shares of currently Incorporated farm, allowing those shares to be included in the green space plan.</p>
<p>Floracliff Nature Sanctuary</p>	<p>Funds are being requested to support the Community Science Nature Kits. The Nature Kits will provide resources for participation in community science projects that contribute to the documentation of biodiversity in central Kentucky's urban and rural greenspaces. Grant funds will be used to purchase binoculars for the Nature Kits. They will be used by participants that do not have or may not be able to afford the equipment, in birding activities. By providing birding equipment and making the activity of birding more accessible, we hope to enrich the birding experience for more people and increase the overall interest of birding in our community.</p>
<p>Louisville Nature Center</p>	<p>The funds would pay for habitat improvements outside our bird blind; primarily repairing and expanding the pond feature to create diversity in habitat as well as a water source. Additionally, we would use the funding to purchase a bird feeder, bird seed and suet for our blind, as our source that previously donated bird seed has gone out of business.</p>
<p>Earth and Spirit Center</p>	<p>We would like to promote birdwatching by launching educational programs with students and the public. We are requesting funds for birding field guides, birding binoculars and a beginning birding habitat guide. Every summer, ESC sponsors Camp Odyssey for underprivileged students. The program includes many activities in the sanctuary as well as forging partnerships with such schools as St. Agnes and Bellarmine College.</p>
<p>KY Resources Council</p>	<p>KRC provides advocacy on environmental and public health issues, direct and indirect legal representation, strategic and technical assistance, and community advocacy education. These services are provided without charge. The funds will be used to support the provision of pro-bono legal services under the Environmental and Community Defense Program.</p>
<p>Office of KY Nature Preserves</p>	<p>This proposal encompasses several ongoing open habitat restoration projects in Central and Western KY. With each of these projects, our goals are to increase native plant diversity and improve the habitat for birds and small mammals by providing adequate food and cover. Four different sites would benefit from the funds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drennon Creek State Nature Preserve, Henry Co, KY</li> <li>2. Julian Savanna State Nature Preserve, Franklin Co, KY</li> </ol>

	<p>3. Green River Natural Areas, Hart Co., KY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rush Island</li> <li>- Timberlake</li> </ul> <p>Any funds received from the BBC this year will be used by KNP to complete habitat management projects within these natural areas.</p>
<p>Kentucky Conservation Committee</p>   <p>Kentucky Conservation Committee (continued)</p>	<p>This year KCC is working on public education and protective policies relating to species protection in two primary focus areas around migration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impacts of birds and wildlife with relation to clean energy development. Our role is to help competing interests work together to minimize species impacts and provide clear information that will help protect migrating species in KY.</li> <li>2. Impact on habitat with special attention to wildlife corridors. We will engage the general public/community groups who support nature and land conservation initiatives in KY and update them on progress and threats.</li> </ol> <p>Funds will be used for research, and educational presentation materials and webinars. Ideally, once we are covid-safe, we can move to more “in person” projects.</p>
<p>Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest</p>	<p>Bernheim is requesting funding from the BBC to support educational nature-based programming for Bernheim’s Spirit Nest – an interactive art installation by internationally renowned artist Jayson Fann. Bernheim educators have developed the Birds of Bernheim program integrating Fann’s Spirit Nest with Bernheim’s Golden Eagle research and MOTUS Wildlife Tracking System.</p> <p>The objectives of this program would be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the diversity of birds found at Bernheim and the habitats they reside in. How these birds are adapted to their surroundings.</li> <li>• Detail ways researchers study birds, specifically by using MOTUS and Golden Eagle trackers to determine migration patterns.</li> <li>• Discuss why bird conservation is important, how individuals can help, and ways we can express the value to different audiences.</li> </ul> <p>Funding would support program related expenses including Birds of Bernheim Birding Kits. These kits would be used during the Birds of Bernheim program, and available for interested parties to checkout from the Education Center. Kits would include Binoculars, a bird identification book, species checklist, and a Birds of Bernheim pamphlet to take home at program completion.</p>
<p>Woods and Waters Land Trust</p>	<p>Our project will support trail expansion at Vaughn Branch Nature Preserve in Frankfort, KY. This will provide access to a variety of additional habitat types, enabling a better ability to organize diverse birding programs. The trail expansion will also improve preserve maintenance because much of the preserve is currently difficult to access efficiently and safely. The existing trail is only 0.25 miles long and located within the northernmost portion of the preserve. However, the preserve has a sustainable capacity for 1.25 miles of natural-surface trail.</p> <p><b>How will the funds be used:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing trail access throughout the Vaughn Branch Preserve. These funds will enable trail mapping and the beginning stages of trail construction.</li> <li>• Increasing the number of birding and other nature programs.</li> </ul>

## **BBC Conservation Report April 2021**

Twenty Wood Stork nests have been confirmed high in the cypress trees at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary: [Wood Stork 2021 Nesting Season Update | Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary](#)

Read about, and celebrate the life of Gee Whiz, the first Whooping Crane to hatch at the International Crane Foundation and the only living son of legendary Whooper Tex: [Honoring Gee Whiz – a Father of Whooping Crane Conservation - International Crane Foundation \(savingcranes.org\)](#)

After the successful removal of lock and dam #6 on the Green River, Nature Conservancy plans to remove lock and dam #5, thereby restoring 200 miles of free-flowing river: [Green River Lock and Dam #6 Removal in Kentucky \(nature.org\)](#)

Restoring rainforest trees on Palmyra Atoll will attract nesting seabirds, such as Red-footed Boobies and Great Frigate Birds, whose nutrient rich droppings will help heal its coral reefs: [Palmyra Atoll | The Nature Conservancy](#)

Innovative approach to solving the coal ash crisis – harvesting its rare earth elements: [Can Harvesting Rare Earth Elements Solve the Coal Ash Crisis? | Sierra Club](#)

[They're here! It's been 17 years, but Brood X cicadas are due to begin emerging soon:](#)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/03/09/cicadas-broodx-environment/?emci=924a962f-9e86-eb11-85aa-00155d43c992&emdi=898001bc-2888-eb11-85aa-00155d43c992&ceid=453160>

[The Great Monarch migration is underway, and they face many obstacles:](#)

[The great monarch migration | Stories | WWF \(worldwildlife.org\)](#)

And don't forget to do your part by planting keystone native species:

[Cultivate These Keystone Plants in Your Yard to Help Bees and Butterflies Thrive and Pollinate \(goodnewsnetwork.org\)](#) ; [Native Plants \(nwf.org\)](#)

### **MARCH BIRDING**

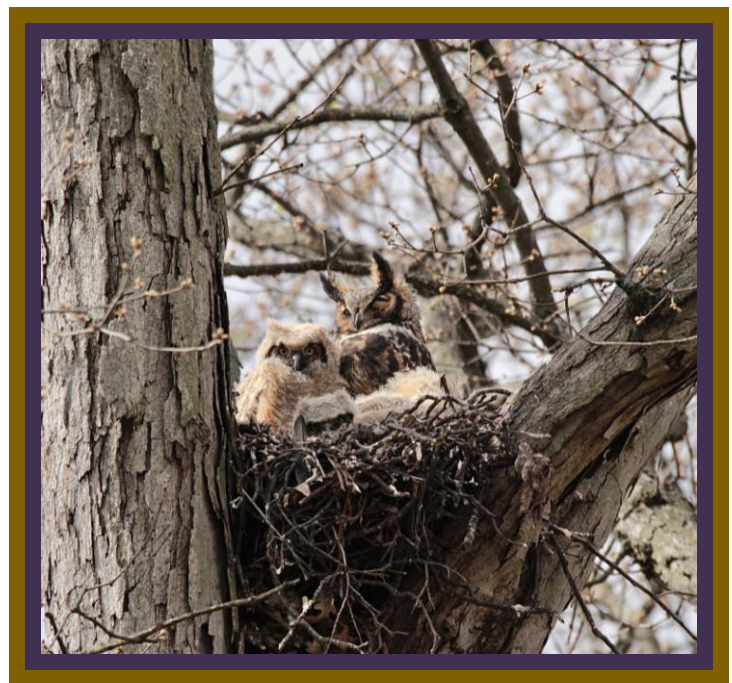
My what a difference a month can make. The trees are bursting with greenery and flowers. Wildflowers carpet the woods. The birds are getting new plumage, setting up territories and building nests. Most of the ducks have migrated north but a few lingering ducks can be seen in the lakes and ponds – Blue-winged and Green winged Teal and Gadwalls. Wood Ducks have returned. Don't forget to look for them in the trees. The Yellow-crowned Night-herons have again returned to Ramona Avenue to build nests. If you have been to lakes and ponds you will see Tree, Northern Rough-winged and Barn





Swallows skimming over the water looking for insects. One of the early returning birds is the Purple Martin and it has been seen at its nest boxes on English Station Road. The first neo-tropical migrants have arrived. There have been several reports of Louisiana Waterthrushes and Yellow-throated Warblers in the Louisville area but other warblers are being seen in other parts of Kentucky. One of the star attractions for this month has been the nesting pair of Great Horned Owls in Cave Hill Cemetery. Many people have gone to view the owlets and their parents in an old Red-tailed Hawk nest. Some shorebirds have arrived in the area - Pectorals and Yellow-legs. This month more migrants will arrive including Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, warblers, vireos, orioles, sparrows, Wood Thrushes, cuckoos, grosbeaks, Indigo Buntings and the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. So be sure and get out, put on your mask, social distance and meet these new arrivals that have traveled thousands of miles as they fan out over the area to nest and raise their young. Don't forget to keep an eye out for Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks as they return north. Here is a useful tool to help predict migration - <https://birdcast.info/>.

Thanks to Lee Payne for his pictures of the owl nest.



**REMEMBER EARTH DAY – APRIL 22**