



# THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG

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

AUGUST 2021

## **NEWS FROM THE BBC BOARD:**

### **AUGUST MEETING – WATERFRONT BOTANICAL GARDENS**

For our first meeting in 17 months (yes, it's been a long time) we have a special event planned.

At 7 pm, we will convene at the Waterfront Botanical Gardens for a tour led by Bob Hill, former columnist for the Courier-Journal, retired proprietor of Hidden Hill Nursery, and storyteller supreme. After a walk around the property, we will end the evening at the visitor center for a presentation on what is to come at the gardens.

The entrance to the gardens is on Frankfort Avenue between River Road and Interstate 71/Story Avenue. The gate will be open at about 6:45 p.m. Please park in the main parking lot.

### **AND MORE:**

In September, we will again be meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Frankfort Avenue on the second Tuesday of every month except March (annual dinner) and June (annual picnic).

Our first three speakers will be:

September: Andrew Melnykovych, who will talk about "Looking for Birds in All the Wrong Places"

October: Thom Barnell, with stories and photos from a recent pelagic trip

November: Pam Spaulding, with a collection of bird photos from the pandemic

### **AND STILL MORE:**

Field trips resume in August. A schedule through the end of October is in this newsletter and on the BBC website.

### **AND FINALLY, THE INEVITABLE COVID NOTE**

With the rapid spread of the highly infectious and dangerous delta variant of COVID19, and the occurrence of infections even in fully vaccinated people, it seems it is still too early to relax and go back to life as it was before March of 2020.

Therefore, the BBC Board is respectfully requesting that those who are **NOT FULLY VACCINATED** **PLEASE WEAR MASKS AT ALL BBC EVENTS – BOTH INDOORS AND OUT.** We encourage everyone

attending indoor events to consider wearing a mask (unless you are speaking) and to observe social distancing. We want everyone to feel safe at meetings and field trips.

We look forward to seeing you in August and thereafter.

Good birding!

The BBC Board

## **THE FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE IS INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

You should check Beckham Bird Club web site and birdKY for every field trip to make sure there is not a change or cancellation.



Some reminders -

1. Read the guidelines before coming on a field trip.
2. Be sure to stow your valuables in the trunk or carry them with you. Do not leave them in the front of the car.
3. Just remember mosquitos, chiggers, ticks and biting flies are waiting for you. Don't forget to bring insect repellent.
4. Have a bottle of water and maybe a snack.
5. Bring your sunscreen lotion.



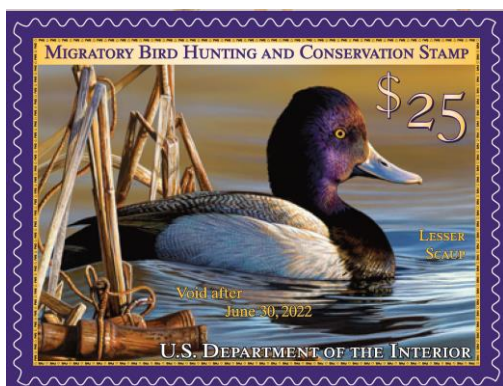
### **KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY FALL MEETING**

The KOS fall weekend meeting will be at Kentucky Dam Village State Park September 17-19.

For more details check the KOS web site at [birdky.org](http://birdky.org)

### **2021 BIRDATHON UPDATE**

Thanks to all who have contributed to this year's Birdathon we have 85% of our goal of \$20,000. If you have not donated, please help us reach our goal. Mail your check to Beckham Bird Club, P.O. Box 5301, Louisville, KY 40255-0301



## THE 2021-2022 FEDERAL MIGRATORY AND CONSERVATION STAMP

One of the easiest ways that anyone can support bird habitat conservation is by buying Federal Duck Stamps - among the most successful conservation tools ever created to protect habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Federal Duck Stamps are conservation revenue stamps; 98 percent of the purchase price goes directly to help acquire and protect wetland habitat and purchase conservation easements for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Wetlands acquired with Duck Stamp dollars help purify water, aid in flood control, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.

As a birder one of the ways that your voice will be heard is to buy your stamp from the American Birding Association. You will also be showing your support for bird conservation in our national wildlife refuges. More information and how you can purchase your stamp can be found on the ABA website at [aba.org](http://aba.org). You may also purchase the stamp at the post office.

## CHANGES TO THE CHECKLIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

The 62nd Supplement to the American Ornithological Society's *Check-list of North American Birds* includes numerous updates to the classification of the continent's bird species. A few changes from this year's supplement, include species splits for Mew Gull, Barred Owl, and Sedge Wren.

The full *Check-list* supplement is available at: <https://academic.oup.com/auk/advance-article/doi/10.1093/ornithology/ukab037/6309332>.

### **Splitting of Barred Owl and Cinereous Owl**

Based primarily on differences in vocalizations, the Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) is being split into two species, the Barred Owl, which retains its English and scientific names for U.S. and Canadian populations, and the Cinereous Owl (*Strix sartorii*) for its counterpart in Mexico

### **Splitting of Mew Gull into Common Gull and Short-billed Gull ([Proposal 2021-A-3](#))**

"If you're a coast-to-coast birder, you may be able to pick up a new species this winter," The Common Gull breeds in Eurasia and is a casual visitor to the eastern U.S. and Canada, and occasionally ventures to Alaska, whereas the Short-billed Gull breeds in

northwestern North America and winters south along the Pacific coast and also into the interior, primarily of the western U.S.

### **Splitting of Sedge Wren and Grass Wren ([Proposal 2021-C-3](#))**

Previous ideas about how Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*) should be divided turn out to be misguided. It turns out that the populations breeding in Canada and the U.S. are distinct from all other populations, including those breeding in Mexico, Central America, and South America, and are being split from the rest. The new southern species, Grass Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*), will retain the scientific name due to reasons of priority, but the new northern species will keep the English name Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus stellaris*).

## **BBC Conservation Report August 2021**

Study finds that birds tend to avoid backyard bird feeders that exhibit excess light and noise:

[Effects of Excess Noise & Light on Backyard Birds | Birding Wire](#)

New coalition working to improve habitat for Swallow-tailed Kites:

[Benefiting Kites and Much More: Forest Companies, Conservation Groups, and Researchers Join Forces to Inform Sustainable Forest Management and Identify Potential Enhancements | American Bird Conservancy \(abcbirds.org\)](#)

Some fun, and bizarre bird calls from ABC:

[Seven Strange and Wonderful Bird Sounds You Won't Believe | ABC \(abcbirds.org\)](#)

An interesting study of woodpecker tongues:

[The Amazing Secrets of Woodpecker Tongues | ABC \(abcbirds.org\)](#)

The dangerous and costly vocation of protecting wildlife:

[The Violent Cost of Conservation | Audubon](#)

Programs that pay farmers to improve the survival of Bobolinks and other grassland birds:

[How Farmers In New England Make Hay for Bobolinks | Audubon](#)

USFWS has released its list of birds of conservation concern:

[USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern | Birding Wire](#)

Watch live Puffins on Seal Island, Maine:

<https://explore.org/livecams/puffins/puffin-burrow-cam?emci=d91eede1-c3d2-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&emdi=e854e131-c9d2-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&ceid=1314690>

After two years of record-setting lows of 30,000 butterflies, this year fewer than 2,000 of these orange-and-black beauties were counted in their winter groves.

<https://ktla.com/news/california/monarch-butterfly-population-moves-closer-to-extinction-as-number-wintering-in-california-hits-record-low/>

Birds as bird and bug pest control for orchards and vineyards:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/at-orchards-and-vineyards-birds-are-outperforming-pesticides/>

Or rodent control for dams and levees:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/raptors-for-flood-control/>

Why birds need clean air safeguards as much as humans:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/birds-need-clean-air-safeguards-just-as-much-as-we-do-heres-why/>

[https://www.audubon.org/news/scientists-still-searching-pathogen-behind-east-s-songbird-epidemic?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement\\_20210720\\_wingspan\\_&utm\\_source=ea&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=engagement\\_20210720\\_wingspan&utm\\_content=&emci=bb07b52e-98e8-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&emdi=431a5c90-98e9-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&ceid=1314690](https://www.audubon.org/news/scientists-still-searching-pathogen-behind-east-s-songbird-epidemic?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement_20210720_wingspan_&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement_20210720_wingspan&utm_content=&emci=bb07b52e-98e8-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&emdi=431a5c90-98e9-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&ceid=1314690)

## **JULY BIRDING**

Some describe July as a slow month in birding. The resident birds are busy feeding young and the fledglings have left their nest and foraging on their own. Migration is practically at a standstill. But if you really want to see our wonderful birds there are lots to see, just take a walk in our parks, cemetery and even in your own backyard and you will see some of the 100+ species recorded in Jefferson County in July. Hummingbirds are busy at your feeders, warblers are still present, Great Egrets can be seen on lots of water ways along with Green Herons and Great Blue Herons. Indigo Buntings bring color to our grasslands. So, take a walk and see what you can find – it could be a treasure of a bird like the Roseate Spoonbill in Warren County. Also get ready for migration as our northern nesters will be returning to the tropics in August.

