



THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

DECEMBER 2023

DECEMBER PROGRAM

Join us on December 12 as Thom Barnell shares images and stories from his Fall 2022 trip to Southern Africa. With the dry season ending and vegetation diminished, wildlife is more easily spotted as they frequent the remaining watering holes. Meanwhile South Africa's coast offers one of "the greatest wildflower shows on the planet" and was worth the trip alone.

Whenever I hear the "Aah-eeh-ah-eeh-aaaaah-eeh-ah-eeh-aaaaah" call of Weissmuller's Tarzan, my childhood visions of Africa immediately come to mind. Hollywood



dubbed the endemic Australian Laughing kookaburra's call to frame their jungle imagery, except when they filmed in Florida or Louisiana. Then it was the Limpkin's call that warned of the lurking jungle dangers. Thank goodness Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom gave us actual footage, the sounds of Africa's wonders, and sometimes featured birds. But the true breakout of Africa's birds came with Disney's 1994 release of the *Lion King*, starring Zazu, the uptight, red-billed hornbill who was charged with keeping order within the kingdom.

From ABA's web site, South America is "the bird continent" with more species than any other landmass, But Africa is "the **birding** continent." Nowhere else are birds as brightly colored, abundant, and easy to see! The "Rainbow Nation" of South Africa offers the very best of the continent and harbors a large proportion of the planet's fauna and flora. It boasts the most regionally endemic bird species of any African country. With 846 bird species recorded, they include more than 160 regional endemics. Zazu is one of them!

Our meeting is on Tuesday, December 12 at 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.

Don't forget to renew your 2024 membership!

The renewal period began on November 1, 2023. We encourage you to renew before December 31, 2023, to avoid a reminder postcard thus saving paper, postage and a larger carbon footprint.

You can renew three (3) ways:

- Print the renewal form from the website (<http://www.beckhambirdclub.org/membership-and-support.html>), complete it and mail it along with a check to the P.O. Box.
- Bring your completed renewal form and cash or check to the December meeting.
- On the website, using Paypal (NOTE: You do NOT need a Paypal account to use this payment method. If you don't have a Paypal account, simply click through the Paypal screens and you will be allowed to enter your credit card information as a guest).
 - If you choose this method, please be sure to also send your address, phone number and email to bbcky1935@gmail.com. This allows us to keep our membership rolls current.



Thank you for your continued support.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, December 3 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. easy	SAM PEDEN PARK, NEW ALBANY – For waterfowl, winter visitors, residents and waterfowl. Bring a scope if you have one. From I-265 in Indiana, take Grant Line Road exit and go south about a mile to park entrance. GPS: 38.319493, -85.825994	Kevin Flowers 502-648-6826
Saturday, December 9 9 a.m. – noon moderate	TURKEY RUN PARK – Residents, winter visitors, especially sparrows. Meet at the Seaton Valley parking lot and walk the Louisville Loop toward the Sky Meadows area. Directions: From I-265 exit (19) Billtown Road, go south and turn left at the T; go 1.5 miles and turn right into Turkey Run Park entrance; parking lot is on the right. GPS: 38.131035, -85.518651	Andrew Melnykovich 502-608-4655

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS



This year marks the 124th Christmas Bird Count sponsored by the National Audubon Society. Your participation is needed in one or more of these counts this year. The date for Louisville is listed below. The CBCs could change due to weather conditions so you should sign up to participate in case the compiler needs to contact you in the event there is a change. New participants should contact the compiler. See birdky.org for other CBCs in the state.

Louisville Christmas Bird Count – December 17, 2023

The Louisville Christmas Bird Count, sponsored jointly by *KOS* and the *Beckham Bird Club*, is scheduled for **Sunday, December 17, 2023**.

Anyone interested in participating should contact me by reaching out by email, or by contacting any BBC board member who is participating themselves. If you can't be in the field on Count Day, let me know if you can help out by watching your feeders in the Count Circle. We're hoping for a great count day, and our section leaders are already planning to scout their areas!

If you happen to go birding within the Count Circle during Count Week (*Dec 14 - 20*), please use eBird to record your checklists, so we can track Count Week species.

Thank you, and good birding to you all! **James A. Wheat, Regional Editor, KY, Louisville CBC (KYLO)**
james.a.wheat@gmail.com

If you can't participate in the Louisville CBC, consider being a feeder watch counter. If you live in the count area all you need to do is count the birds that come to your feeder. There are protocols for counting the birds. Please let James Wheat know you will count the birds at your feeder and get the details of how to participate.

LOUISVILLE Sunday, December 17	We need your help covering the nine sections in the 15-mile diameter count circle! If you've participated in the past, please reach out to the CBC person with whom you birded, and let them know you're interested in helping again. If you haven't, please contact compiler James Wheat at james.a.wheat@gmail.com to let him know of your interest.
BERNHEIM FOREST, Sunday, January 1, 2023	All participants call or email compiler Michael Callan 502-592-7008 or mikesindahouse@gmail.com
OTTER CREEK Saturday, December 31	All participants email or call compiler Michael Autin, mauniquity@gmail.com 502-298-2456
PARADISE TBA	All participants email or call compiler Brainard Palmer-Ball. (CP) 502-330-3998 or brainard@mindspring.com

CBC Compilation Potluck Dinner

Those participating in the Louisville CBC are invited to attend a potluck dinner and compilation of birds at Win Ahrens's home at 21 Autumn Hill, Prospect at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 16. Please RSVP at winahrens@aol.com and mention what dish you are bringing. Hope to see everyone there!



In Sympathy

The Beckham Bird Club wishes to extend our sympathy to John Krull on the death of his brother, Frank, on November 11. Frank had been a long-time member of the club and had help out on many Louisville Christmas Bird Counts. The club also wishes to thank Frank's family for including BBC in memorial gifts.

PAST FIELD TRIPS

Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs WMA in Henderson County -October 28 Eleven people attended; cool, gray day in low 50s; band of showers interrupted things for about an hour early afternoon. We had a species tally in the mid-60s. With dry conditions in that part of the state for a couple of months and a broken pump, water for marsh birds was at a premium. We got skunked on rails as I was afraid, we might. Sparrows were in abundance but we had a tough time getting the whole group on some of the better birds. A Grasshopper Sparrow and probable LeConte's were the best found in Hardy Slough. Late in the day a few of us found at least one and probably two LeConte's in another area that used to be called the Woods Tract North along KY 268. Two Marsh Wrens were seen but we dipped on Sedge. I had scheduled the trip a week later than normal to avoid any conflicts with hunting seasons, so more waterfowl than normal were around. These included multiple flyover flocks of Snow Geese and Greater White-fronted Geese; one flock of Snows had a bird so small that we called it a Ross's. Also present were many dabbling ducks including Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, and a few American Black Ducks. The gray day was not conducive to seeing raptors but we had at least a couple of Northern Harriers.

Long Run Park – November 11. Eighteen members and one guest met at Long Run Park on a cool and sunny fall morning. We started the morning with 7 species of waterfowl on the lake and a low flyover of an adult Bald Eagle. Other highlights included large groups of Common Grackles flying over and large kettles of Black and Turkey Vultures. We managed 42 species on this beautiful fall morning.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S154241734>

Muscatatuck/Hardy Lake – November 19 Sunny skies, no breeze. Temps started in the high 20s rising to the low 60s by the end of the trip. BBC field trip, Part One. Discovery Pond area to auto

loop. Fourteen birders met at Muscatatuck NWR on a cold clear late fall morning. After birding at Discovery Pond area, we moved on to the auto tour loop for our second list and ended the morning enjoying lunch outside near the feeders. While the waterfowl were scarce, we got all seven of the winter woodpecker species and had good looks at Fox Sparrows and American Tree Sparrows.

Hardy Lake: Sunny skies, no breeze. Temperatures in the high 50s.

BBC field trip. Nine birders continued on from Muscatatuck to Hardy Lake to end the day of birding. Again, the waterfowl were scarce, but we picked up Buffleheads and Horned Grebes along with two Red-breasted Nuthatches.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S154806130> ; <https://ebird.org/checklist/S154806305>;

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S154806466>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S154807386>

BE PART OF OUR FIELD TRIPS AND JOIN THESE SMILING FACES.



NOVEMBER 18 – OHIO RIVER – INDIANA SIDE



NOVEMBER 19 – MUCATATUCK/HARDY LAKE



*Happy Holidays and
Good Birding in 2024*