



# THE BECKHAM OBSERVER

BECKHAMBIRDCLUB.ORG

JUNE 2023

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

THERE IS NO MEETING THIS MONTH.

SEE YOU AT THE PICNIC.



*The Annual Beckham Bird Club Picnic will be on Sunday, June 4 at 4:00 p.m. at Joe Creason Park in the Gazebo. Join us for a fun afternoon of birding, food and friend ship. Bring a dish to share, insect*

*repellent, **a chair** and ,of course, your binoculars. There is no cost but the BBC asks you to donate a minimum of \$5.00 to the BBC Birdathon when you come to the picnic. We encourage you to bring your own cloth napkin, plates, cups and utensils. That is non-disposable items.*

**PICNIC RESERVATION- Deadline June 2**

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

I will bring \_\_\_ salad/vegetable \_\_\_ desert \_\_\_ other(\_\_\_\_\_)

Number attending who want chicken \_\_\_\_\_

Number attending at who do not want chicken \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Carol Challas, 325 Blankenbaker Lane, Louisville, KY 40207-1234

**Due to slow delivery of mail please mail your reservation ASAP.**

## BIRDATHON

The birds have been counted – **112** in all. Now it is up to you to help make our 2023 BBC Birdathon a success. Can you do it? Many members and friends have already made and sent in their pledge. But we need all our members to contribute to help us raise the money to support the organizations that have asked for grants from BBC. No amount is too small. Please send in your contribution to the person you sponsored or mail to the BBC post office box. Help us beat last year's \$22,000. Make check payable to **Beckham Bird Club**.

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

This the last field trip before resuming in mid-August. But this doesn't mean you stop birding as there are many summer residents to be seen during the summer.

Saturday, May 27 9 a.m. – noon easy	<b>HARRODS CREEK PARK</b> – For late migrants, residents, summer birds. 6530 Montero Dr., Prospect. Meet at the parking lot at the bottom of the hill. <b>GPS: 38.340941, -85.600052</b>	Win Ahrens 502-500-1175
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## PAST FIELD TRIPS

**HAYS KENNEDY PARK/GARVIN BROWN PRESERVE – APRIL 29** Twelve members joined on a calm cool morning that threatened rain, but fortunately held off until trip's end. Most of the best birds were in the parking lot of Hays Kennedy where we encountered a pair of Kingbirds, a Baltimore Oriole, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Blue-winged Teal, Savannah Sparrow, Meadowlark, and all 5 birds found in the region whose name ends in swallow, the highlight of which was perched Bank Swallows. Bald Eagles would wander back and forth at odd points throughout the day and just before entering the preserve a Green Heron came and landed briefly on a downed tree before disappearing down in the brush at the water's edge. Despite lack of wind, a lot of birds were hard to see but eventually we saw or detected a number of migrants and breeding residents including Yellow Warblers chasing each other, Common Yellowthroat, Indigo Bunting( seen only by leader), hidden Gray Catbirds, Orchard Oriole, White-crowned Sparrows and a singing Blue Grosbeak which was appreciated until it too appeared to chase or be chased off of its perch by a Red-winged Blackbird. After the group split a few determined birders heard a Northern Waterthrush, found a singing Palm Warbler, a skulking Least Sandpiper, and a Pileated Woodpecker flew over the parking lot. Ending with 66 species for the day, we did well in spite of a lack of warblers, vireos or tanagers, which was unusual for the late date.

**DRAUT PARK – MAY 10** The morning began at Draut Park with 12 members and 1 guest on Wednesday May, 10, 2023. The weather was very pleasant, approximately 55 degrees to start and 75 degrees at the end of three hours! Skies were completely clear. We were greeted initially by many Red-winged Blackbirds singing and staking out their territories in the Reeds and Cattails! We were able to welcome back some birds that had

recently returned from their winter trips, such as Gray Catbirds, a Great Egret, a Great-crested Flycatcher & Swallows! We also had nice looks at a few migrants, including a Northern Waterthrush & American Redstart, as well as a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak! By the end of our trip we had spied 5 different hawks! 2 Coopers and 2 Red-shouldered and one too high to ID. It was a perfect morning to spend time together doing something we all love!

**ANCHORAGE TRAIL – MAY 20** Four determined birders waited out the morning rain to see what migrants dropped in. Birding seemed very slow... because it largely was slow. Especially for warblers: 9 species and only 15 individuals were observed. Highlights included great looks at male and female Blackpoll warblers, a Magnolia warbler, a female Bay-breasted Warbler, a male American Redstart and a Common Yellowthroat for a total of 7 individuals sighted and all other warblers were only heard. We also had great looks at the many Swainson's Thrushes and Carolina Chickadees pretending to be warblers. Many Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were also present but only heard. Other highlights included a singing Barred Owl, a very yellow Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, RT Hummingbird, and many adorable Wood Duck babies. Thanks to everyone who waited out the rain for a very enjoyable morning of birding.

### **BIG GLOBAL DAY RESULTS FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY**



As I drove around in the dark atop Holsclaw Hill looking unsuccessfully for night birds at 5a.m., a light drizzle fell, causing concern about how our Global Bird Day would go, but as the sun rose and the rain let up, May 13, 2023, turned out to be a perfect weather day for birding, with mild temperatures, sun and little or no wind. Over the course of the day, 66 people would participate knowingly or unwittingly in this spectacular event, finding 155 species, one of which, a Northern Bobwhite, was of dubious origin and likely an escapee. One other not included in this count, a Hermit Thrush, may need substantiating evidence. All told the adventurous and determined birders found 5 species of waterfowl,

12 species of shorebird, 9 raptors, 3 owls, 3 falcons, 7 vireos, 10 sparrows(including towhees), and 32 species of warbler!!! The highlights of the day were nesting Hooded Mergansers( Greg W.), Black-billed Cuckoo( Natalie and Nathan R.), Chuck-Wills-Widow( Meg and Steve B.), Black-bellied Plover( David B.), Long-billed Dowitcher( Michael A., David B.), Mississippi Kite( Andrew M., Ben and Mary Y.), Merlin( Mark M.), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher( Sunil and Indira T.), Bell's Vireo ( Jamie B., Greg W.), Nelson's Sparrow ( Michael A.), Connecticut Warbler( Greg W.), Cerulean and Black-throated Blue Warblers( Patrice P.) Our rivals in Lexington, appeared to have about 5 or 6 more people in the field on count day and while they had several more birds than us, accumulatively, a few were not accepted as of this writing, and one was introduced. So with our unaccepted species omitted, we only ended up with one less species than Lexington - 154 to their 155. We had several they didn't have: Hooded Merganser,

Pied-billed Grebe, Chuck-Wills-Widow, American Coot, Black-bellied Plover, Long-billed Dowitcher, Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, Osprey, Merlin, Bell's Vireo, Nelson's Sparrow, Worm-eating and Cerulean Warblers and Northern Waterthrush. I think it is important to note that if we hadn't lost so much of our grassland habitats to development, especially in the east end, we would have beaten Fayette County by several species, even with fewer birders in the field. A lot of work went into making sure all areas were covered and many who initially spoke of limited time, stayed out later, giving it their all. To everyone that got out and gave 100%, thank you for making this a lovely and successful Global Bird Day. A BIG THANKS to Michael Autin for organizing and compiling the results for Jefferson County. Thanks to Jamie Baker for the picture of the Connecticut Warbler seen in Nettelroth Sanctuary by many birders.

## **SPRING MIGRATION SEASON 2023**

**By Brainard Palmer-Ball**

Having been birding in Kentucky for more than fifty years, I can say pretty much with certainty that I do not personally recall such a tardy songbird migration as this year. The warm March had things going early, but the cool month of April, unfavorable winds, and lots of precipitation to our south really put things behind. Spring songbird migrants take advantage of tail winds on which to move north during spring. When prevailing winds are not favorable, they just sit tight. Also, they require nights with the absence of inclement weather (mostly rain), so with a low pressure sitting on the Gulf Coast for a week to ten days in late April and early May, the birds couldn't make much progress north.

On the day of the Beckham Bird Club Birdathon – held on May 4<sup>th</sup> this year -- we could only muster 22 species of warblers including only *one* Tennessee Warbler and hardly any of the "peak" migration species (one Cape May, one Blackburnian). In addition, we did not encounter a *single* migrant thrush among Veery, Swainson's, and Gray-cheeked. In fact, the only migrant thrush we had was a single Hermit, usually gone by most May 4ths. Encountering only one Rose-breasted Grosbeak was also remarkable for the date.

This situation finally changed during the following week. Prevailing winds in the southeastern United States finally switched around to south as the low-pressure system finally moved off the Atlantic coast. This ushered in all of the songbirds that had been held up to our south. That, along with some unsettled weather that included periods of rain and north to northeast winds just to our north, resulted in a very nice fallout of birds that included both early migrants like Palm Warblers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Blue-



headed Vireos as well as peak period migrants like Philadelphia Vireos and Magnolia, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, and Cape May warblers.

For about ten days our region was blessed with the presence of many migrant songbirds from flycatchers and vireos to thrushes and warblers. When weather cleared up a bit during the third week of May, most of our birds were able to move again, leaving us behind for the Great Lakes states and beyond.

Thanks to Jamie Baker for the picture of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

## **BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCHES**



If you are on birdky you know that the Brown-headed Nuthatches in Kentucky are in danger due to the removal of Shortleaf Pine trees near London, Kentucky. Below is an email sent by Frank Renfrow about the removal of these trees. We need our members to email or call to ask them not to remove these trees **ASAP**. Information about who to contact is below. Please help by emailing or calling to express your concerns about this situation. The birds are in need of our protection. Please help.

The Shortleaf Pine habitat at the Daniel Boone National Forest (USFS) London District Ranger Station is at risk of being destroyed for the purpose of building a new Ranger Station with a road project being the excuse for doing so. A slight variance in the plans could put the road through an adjacent field where a new Ranger Station could also be built, keeping the pine grove from being adversely impacted. Please contact the USFS, the DOI, your Kentucky State Representative and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to try to get this project changed. The project is where KY 2069 is being rerouted to a new intersection with a widened US 25, Laurel County, London, KY. London is the only location where Brown-headed Nuthatches are presently known to breed in Kentucky. The only other known breeding locations in London are two highly endangered site, one a USFS location, another a State of Kentucky location, where there have been recent pine tree removals right in the middles of the nesting season. We are talking about very small numbers here , possibly consisting of only one breeding pair at each location so they are by that measure critically endangered within the State of Kentucky. To compound the tragedy of this situation what pines might be removed by the new road project may be only a small percentage compared to what the USFS may remove to build a new Ranger Station right where the pine grove is located. The primary focus of the USFS should be in protecting critically imperiled birds and their natural habitats not in destroying them for the sake of building a new facility! The Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves has done what is right on this by listing the Brown-headed Nuthatches as

category S1 Critically Imperiled for Kentucky. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife has done a bit by contacting the agencies involved not to cut the trees during the nesting season but unfortunately their oversight did not keep the cutting from happening in the other USFS and the State location both during the nesting season. Many birds were undoubtedly nesting in these trees including in all likelihood the Brown-headed Nuthatches. KY Fish and Wildlife could do a lot more I think on status listing and breeding season protection enforcement so it would be helpful to contact them as well.

Frank Renfrow Fort Thomas

A representative with the USFS, William Ryan has requested that we send you his contact information so that he can coordinate directly with you and others interested in the nuthatches and this project, please find his contact information below:

**William Ryan**

**Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist**

**Forest Service**

**Daniel Boone National Forest, London Ranger District**

**p: 606-864-4163 x102 c: 606-767-2000 f: 606-878-0811**

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Thanks to Steve Brown for the picture of the Brown-headed Nuthatch.