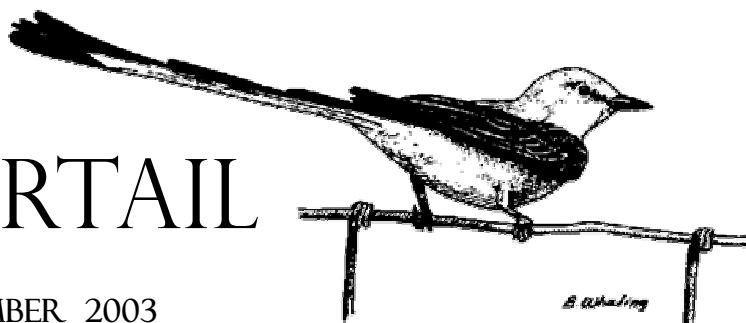


TULSA SCISSORTAIL



TULSA
AUDUBON
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER
VOL. LXV, NO. 2

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2003

EDITOR: PETER LOWEN

From the President

Last month Emily Byrum, our National Audubon Grassroots Coordinator, asked chapters in Oklahoma to visit with some of our congressional staff to present our views on the upcoming energy bill. On the Energy Committee Conference are Senator Nickles and Representative Lucas from Oklahoma, and they will probably have decided by the time you read this the fate of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As you may know, the Senate voted earlier this year to protect it by a narrow margin, and the House Bill included measures that would open the Arctic to oil and gas drilling.

Suzie Tramel and I met with Sharon Keesler, one of Senator Nickle's aides here in Tulsa, in late September, and we explained our opinion. Sharon said that while the Senator is obviously in favor of drilling, he did not "go to the wall" on the issue when it originally did not make into the Senate bill, and she did not think he would push it in the conference report. She felt very certain that if it was included, it would be filibustered, so she did not think the conference committee would be pushing to include it. That's good news, but we'll see what happens!

It was a good meeting, and Sharon said she would look over the information we left, and pass it on to the staff person who handles energy matters. She also thought this was the first time we, as group, had met with her (unfortunately true) and that she would tell the Senator we had been there. Excerpts from a letter left with Ms. Keesler can be found on page 3.

We may not have changed anyone's mind on the issue, but it is an important part of our democratic system to at least register our opinions.

John Kennington

TAS Upcoming Events

Tuesday Morning Birders. The Tuesday Morning Birders meets at 8:00 a.m. every Tuesday morning at the Tulsa Garden Center from November through March. Trip leaders are listed by week.

1st Tues	Dave Edwards	865-7598
	Bob Gard	241-4273
	Jim Thayer	494-3784
2nd Tues	Bob & Donna Germany	493-2726
3rd Tues	Jo Loyd	835-2946
4th Tues	Patty & Paul Moser	252-2824
5th Tues	Bruce Nixon	494-3865

First Saturday of every month. Bird with Oxley Nature Center Staff in Mohawk Park. Meet 8:00 a.m. at parking lot. Call 669-6644 for details.

Bird Seed Update

Our annual bird seed sale day is past, but we do have a limited amount of extra seed. To see what is still available, check our website, www.tulsaaudubon.org or call John Kennington at 809-6325.

November

1 Sat. **Class - Basics in Digiscoping.** Jim Arterburn will discuss and demonstrate how to take pictures using a digital camera with a spotting scope. For time and meeting place, call 481-5077 or e-mail

j.w.arterburn@worldnet.att.net.

18 Tue. **Society Meeting.** Don Wolf, Biologist at Sutton Avian Research Center, "Lesser Prairie Chickens."

22-23 Sat.-Sun **Field Trip.** Black Kettle National Grasslands-Foss Lake-Washita NWR for western Oklahoma fall special ties..cranes, hawks, sparrows. For information, call Marty Kamp, 494-8978, mkamp@worldnet.att.net.

December

6 Sat. **Field Trip.** Meet at Lake Yahola monument 3 P.M. for late afternoon owl and hawk hunt. Leader: Patricia Seibert 747-4202, cell 906-4844, barnowl674@aol.com.

16 Tue. **Society Meeting.** "Annual Show and Tell" slide presentation. Attendees are invited to bring up to 10 of their favorite slides on any subject of general interest. Contact Lynda Fritts 341-7431, okbirdwoman@yahoo.com. **Bring goodies to share after the meeting.**

20 Sat. **Christmas Bird Count.** Tulsa Audubon Society will participate in the National Audubon Society 104th annual count. For information, contact Jo Loyd, 835-2946, jo.loyd@worldnet.att.net.

Getting a head start on 2004?

January

10 Sat. **Eagle Days.** Meet between 8 and 10 a.m. in the parking lot of the Watchable Wildlife Area, east of the Corps of Engineers Office on the north side of the Arkansas River at Lake Keystone dam. For information contact Bob Gard 241-4273, gardb@aol.com or Dave Edwards, 865-7398.

18 Sun. **Eagle Days.** See January 10 information.

Nickel Preserve Seed Harvest Day Saturday, November 8th

Volunteers are needed to help gather wildflower seed for a savanna restoration project at the preserve. No experience? None needed. You'll be an expert in no time. Bring a lunch and snacks. The Preserve will provide sodas and bottled water. Wear long pants and sleeves, bring cloth gloves (some provided), and wear a belt (to hold seed containers). Meet at 9:00a.m. at the entrance to Sawmill Hollow. The plan is to work until lunch, eat, and continue to around 2p.m. You need not stay for the entire time. Phone: (918) 456-7601

Janet Slater, you will be missed.

Tulsa Audubon lost a true friend and wonderful birder on September 29, 2003.



Janet started her passion for bird-watching when she was eight. Her parents, Clara and Harold Spore were avid nature lovers. Janet grew up surrounded by influential birders and was a second generation Audubon Society member. Her parents were on the committee to help create Oxley Nature Center. Two of her mentors were Harriet Barkley and Edith Forest.

Her love for Tulsa Audubon Society kept her busy as Vice-President, Publicity Chair, and Secretary which she gave up reluctantly when she became sick.

She and her husband went on many birding elder hostel programs. They included their grandchildren when they could join them.

Yes, Janet, you will be missed.

Ruthie Lowrie

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

SATURDAY DEC. 20, 2003

Mark your calendars and plan to join a team for this dawn-to-dusk census. All birders should be prepared to pay a \$5 fee that day to the team leader per National Audubon Society requirements. The 15-mile diameter count circle, centered at



116th St. North and Sheridan Road, is divided into 11 areas with a leader assigned to each area. We need about 55 people. Contact Jo Loyd to get your assignment today! Dress warmly, bring your binocs, have fun, and don't miss the post-count pot-luck dinner. Remember, everybody counts!

Jo Loyd 835-2946
jo.loyd@worldnet.att.net

TULSA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS

President: John Kennington 809-6325 Vice-President: Lynda Fritts 669-6644
Secretary: Cyndie Browning 492-5622 Treasurer: Mary Jackson 254-1350
Recorder: Amy Lambert 747-4202, 272-4794

Directors: Carol Eames, Bob Gard, Jo Loyd, Tomye Mainer, Patty Moser

TAS Website: <http://www.tulsaaudubon.org>

Tulsa Scissortail is the bimonthly newsletter of the Tulsa Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. As the "Scissortail" newsletter goes to the printer two weeks before the date of issue, your editor needs items for that issue at least a week prior to that (For Jan/Feb 2004, that will be Dec. 8th-ish). All articles, ideas, and constructive criticisms are welcome. Regrettably for my inaugural newsletter, I didn't save any room for a self-congratulatory article. Maybe next time.

e-mail: thelowenfamily@aol.com

phone: 296-3093

Thanks - Peter Lowen, Editor



Recorder's Report

August - September 2003

Reorder: Amy Lambert
Oncewasamy@aol.com

Mail: 12006 E. 80th Street North
Owasso, OK 74055

Amy Lambert 272-6595 or Pat Seibert 747-202

Species	Date	Count	Location	Observer
R Pledadis Species	02-Sep-03	1	Lake Keystone, Osage Point	B.Gard, et al
R Least Bittern	17-Jul-03	1	Sperry Lake	Loyd/Seibert
R Tricolored Heron	17-Jul-03	1	Keystone WMA	Loyd/Seibert
R Roseate Spoonbill	04-Aug-03	3	Lake Keystone, Osage Point	M.Kamp, S.Ruby
R Roseate Spoonbill	02-Sep-03	1	Hwy 99 N of Cleveland	B.Gard, et al
O Common Merganser	11-Jul-03	1	Keystone Area	J.Arterburn
O Common Merganser	09-Sep-03	1	Keystone Dam & Arkansas River	B.Germany,et al
O Osprey	28-Jul-03	1	Lake Yahola	J.Arterburn
American Golden-Plover	02-Sep-03	1	Lake Keystone, Osage Point	B.Gard, et al
O Solitary Sandpiper	05-Jul-03	2	Oxley Nature Center	B.Carrell
O Spotted Sandpiper	07-Jul-03	4	Mohawk Park, Oxley, Lake Sherry	T.Mitchell
O Spotted Sandpiper	11-Jul-03	10	Keystone Area	J.Arterburn
O Baird's Sandpiper	03-Jun-03	7	South Tulsa County	T.Mainer, et al
O Pectoral Sandpiper	07-Jul-03	5	Mohawk Park, Oxley, Lake Sherry	T.Mitchell
O Stilt Sandpiper	11-Jul-03	4	Keystone Area	J.Arterburn
R Laughing Gull	24-Jul-03	1	Keystone Area	J.Arterburn,S.Metz
O Ring-billed Gull	09-Sep-03	51	Keystone Dam & Arkansas River	B.Germany,et al
R Common Tern	16-Aug-03	1	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	J.Arterburn
R Common Tern	15-Sep-03	10	Salt Creek Cove	J.Arterburn
O Forster's Tern	05-Jul-03	1	Lake Yahola	B.Carrell
R Eurasian Collared-Dove	10-Jul-03	1	Gilcrease Museum Rd	B.Germany
R Monk Parakeet	26-Sep-03	5	Res. Owasso	R. Brown
R Black-billed Cuckoo	12-Aug-03	1	Keystone Area	B.Nixon, et al
R Common Poorwill	05-Oct-03	1	Williams Center Green	S.Metz
R Blue-winged Warbler	07-Sep-03	1	Feyodi Park, Pawnee Cty	B. Gall
O Yellow Warbler	05-Oct-03	1	Williams Center Green	S.Metz
R Prairie Warbler	02-Sep-03	1	Feyodi Park, Pawnee Cty	B.Gard, et al
O Prothonotary Warbler	22-Sep-03	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
O Northern Waterthrush	23-Aug-03	1	Oxley Nature Center	B.Carrell
O Northern Waterthrush	22-Sep-03	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
O Yellow-breasted Chat	05-Oct-03	1	Williams Center Green	S.Metz
O Yellow-headed Blackbird	22-Jul-03	1	West Tulsa County	J.Loyd,et al
Yellow-headed Blackbird	23-Sep-03	1	North Tulsa County	P. Moser, et al

O = Out of Date

R = Rare

Excerpts from a letter left with Ms. Keesler concerning the Arctic Wildlife Refuge:

“On behalf of the Tulsa Audubon Society, I want to encourage you to please ensure the Energy Conference Committee Report does not include the House-passed authorization of drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The report should also not include any "compromise" drilling provisions.

“We strongly support protecting the Arctic Refuge, especially the coastal plain, one of the most important regions on the planet for conserving biological diversity. We know the oil industry would do their best to drill in a responsible manner. Unfortunately, even responsible oil drilling would subject it to a spiderweb of roads, pipelines, drill pads, housing, and other infrastructure that would destroy the wilderness character of the land and limit the free movement of wildlife.



“Drilling in the refuge is not the answer to America's energy problems. It would not appreciably reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil and would not insulate the United States from short-term volatility in the world oil market. The government estimates that only six months of economically recoverable oil exists in the coastal plain and it would not come online for 10 years.

“A much better approach to securing our energy future would be to increase energy efficiency standards, particularly for our growing fleet of sport utility vehicles. If SUVs had to meet the fuel economy standards now in force for passenger cars, we would save more oil over the next decade than would be produced by drilling in the Arctic Refuge. (We're not against SUVs, we just think they should be more fuel efficient.)”

Summer of the Terns

by Gail Storey

For many years, members of the Tulsa Audubon Society have monitored the local nesting sites of Least Terns. The late Fred Pianalto initiated Tulsa Audubon's relationship with the terns when he began observing them in their nursery colonies on the sandbars of the Arkansas River. For the past several years, I have been a member of the Least Tern observation team. Someone on the team counts the terns each day during the nesting season and looks for any signs of trouble or disturbance. While I had some knowledge of Least Terns, I was totally unprepared for my experience with them this summer. On July 28, 2003, at about 5:30 p.m., I received a telephone call from my friend Gary Siftar. Gary and Kathy Siftar are volunteer wildlife rehabilitators specializing in birds of prey. I began as a wildlife rehabilitator two years ago. Most of my limited experience has been with bats. Gary was calling from the office of Dr. Paul Welch, a veterinarian who, with his staff, cares for injured wildlife free of charge. Gary was there picking up an injured raptor, when he learned that someone had brought in several chicks and eggs, some of which were in the process of hatching. The staff had identified them as Least Terns. It was almost closing time and something had to be done. Gary asked me if I would take the chicks. I told him that I had no experience with that species, but he said that no one else had any experience either. I agreed to try. I immediately drove to the clinic and when I arrived, Gary was waiting for me with a shoebox. Inside were some tiny speckled eggs and some tiny speckled chicks. Some of the eggs were hatching at that very moment. Gary also gave me a business card for the woman who had brought in the chicks. I called her from my car. I thought that perhaps the eggs and chicks could be placed back in their nests. I was able to reach the woman and she told me that her ex-husband and two little sons had picked up the eggs on a sandbar in the river. It was in an area that, to my knowledge, had never been used by the terns. I could hear one of the boys telling his mother that the adult terns had been diving at them. When the eggs began hatching, the woman brought them to the clinic.

When I got home, I placed the box over a heating pad. At that point, I had eight newly hatched chicks and six eggs. I had no idea what to do. I began making phone calls. Gary e-mailed me a diet for tern chicks. I had most of the ingredients. I searched my National

Wildlife Rehabilitators Association directory for people who might have experience with terns. I found a rehabilitator in Colorado with some experience and called her. She was able to offer some advice. I could not get the chicks to take the diet, but I was not too concerned at that point, as newly hatched chicks can survive for a time without eating.

There was another serious problem. The Interior Least Tern is on the Endangered Species List. The removal of chicks or eggs is a federal crime. I knew that Kevin Stubbs with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service oversees the Least Terns in Oklahoma. I desperately wanted to reach him to report the incident, but also because I was still hoping that the chicks could be returned to the nesting area. After many calls, I was able to get his home telephone number and call him. He was very nice to me, but quite upset about the chicks.

The next morning, Kevin called with information about a Least Tern propagation project in South Dakota. It is operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. I was able to reach the biologist there and she was quite helpful.

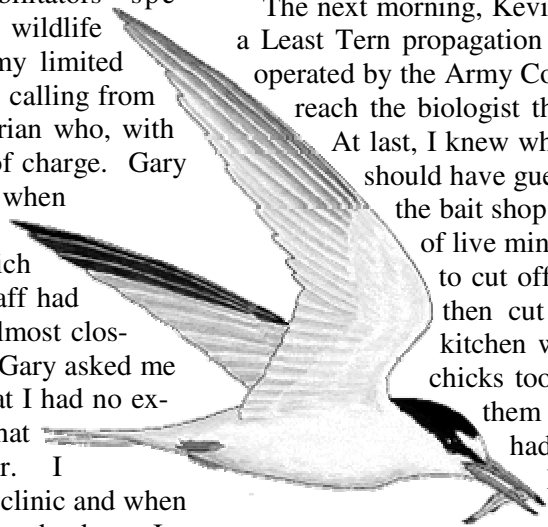
At last, I knew what to feed them – fresh fish. (I should have guessed.) I immediately headed to the bait shop on Pine. I bought a half-pound of live minnows. To feed the chicks, I had to cut off the heads of the minnows and then cut them into small pieces. My kitchen was a house of horrors, but the chicks took right to the fresh fish. I fed them with tweezers. By this time, I had moved them into an aquarium.

I put sand in the bottom and warmed the aquarium with heating pads on top and underneath. I kept the whole thing covered with a towel most of the time. Least tern chicks are semi-precocious. They can walk immediately after hatching. The little things were simply adorable. They were covered with soft, fluffy, buff-colored down. They would flap their stumpy little wings and come running toward the fish. I made them a cardboard "Mama" tern and put it near them at feeding time. They had the sweetest little calls. They chirped contentedly most of the time, but would get a little louder when they were hungry or heard us in the morning. I kept their aquarium on the kitchen drainboard. Glenn and I were enchanted with them.

Sadly, three of the chicks were not thriving. I tried my best, but within a couple of days they died.

Meanwhile, Kevin had informed Tom Tidwell, a law enforcement officer with the Fish & Wildlife Service, about the incident. On July 30, Kevin and Tom came to

Continued on next page



Gardening For Life

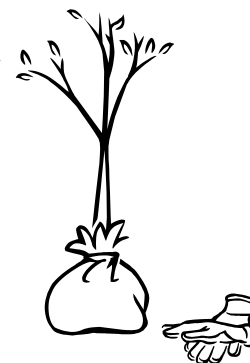
Carol Eames

Autumn is the best time to plant new trees and shrubs in your landscape. There is still time for roots to become established before the plant goes dormant for the winter. Consider planting some of our beautiful native trees and shrubs that provide food and shelter for our native wildlife.

The viburnum family of shrubs is great and one of the best is the arrowwood viburnum, so named because the straight branches of this shrub were used by the Native Americans as shafts for their arrows. It grows in sun to partial shade and produces berries which are

eaten by several bird species. It also provides good protective cover in the summer.

Some other things to think about before winter are creating a small brush pile by collecting yard debris like branches, twigs and fallen leaves. A brush pile is excellent cover for birds and small mammals and can also offer a hibernation area for turtles, salamanders and insects. Many butterfly species will lay their eggs or overwinter as pupae in brush piles while the mourning cloak butterfly overwinters as an adult in woody debris.



Summer of the Terns (cont'd)

my house to see the terns and get details on the incident. Kevin had been to the nesting site. He informed me that the people involved had raided almost all of the nests. It would not be possible to return the chicks. Tom asked me many questions. He was preparing a case. He took the dead chicks and the remaining eggs as evidence. He also took pictures of the chicks.

That day, I made a very fortunate contact with a wonderful woman, Meryl Faulkner in California. I found her name in my directory. She had years of experience with Least Terns and offered me a great deal of advice.

A few days after the terns were taken from the river, Kevin spoke with a reporter from the *Tulsa World* about the incident. I received a call from reporter Michael Overall asking to come to the house to talk to me and to bring a photographer. On the day that they came, Kevin was also there to talk to them. We wanted to stress the importance of not disturbing nesting terns. On August 7, I was quite surprised to see my picture with the terns on the front page of the newspaper.

As the days passed, to my surprise, the five remaining chicks grew and thrived. I made almost daily trips to the bait shop. I found a better one near the Keystone Dam. Kevin and some of the other staff members of the Fish & Wildlife Service seined on the Arkansas River for minnows. I set up a little minnow operation in our house. I had two ice chests with aerators going. As the chicks grew, they began taking live minnows from a dish of water. I moved them to a larger container. Eventually, I moved them to an outside cage during the day. It was pop-up screen room designed for use at the beach. I put

a shallow container of water in it. They loved to catch their minnows out of it. They also began flying a little. Sadly, one morning, I found one of the chicks dead. I had taken them to the vet the day before, because a couple of them had swollen vents. The vet could not determine the cause of this or see an urgent problem.

Eventually, we faced a bigger problem. What was to become of the chicks? Kevin and I made many calls around the country. Gary and Kathy also helped greatly in our research. My true desire was to take them to a facility with an adequate flight cage, let them be conditioned there, and then released. Kevin felt that it was so late in the season, that it would be impossible to find a flock of terns that they could join. Also, the data on success of hand-reared terns is sketchy at best. Therefore, the decision was made to place them in a zoo. After much investigation, Kevin decided that the Fort Worth Zoo would be the best place. They have a large exhibit called **Texas Wild**. Native habitats are featured. One of the habitats is the Gulf Coast. I spoke with the curator and liked him. We made arrangements to transfer the terns. Kevin had to obtain permits from Texas and Oklahoma to move them. On August 26, I drove the birds to the Oklahoma City Zoo. My friend, Patty Mandrell, kindly went along. There we met two keepers from the Fort Worth Zoo and I said farewell to "my" beautiful little birds.

It is important to strive to educate the public about the harm that is done by disturbing wildlife. These beautiful little birds have missed the life that they should have had because of some uncaring people. I visited the Fort Worth Zoo recently. It is a great zoo and I hope that our Tulsa terns will be content there.

Editor's note: Gail is outstanding!

NAS/TAS Introductory Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Email: _____

Please check:

\$20 1 yr Introductory \$30 2 yr Introductory

\$15 1 yr Student Grade: _____ School _____

\$15 1 yr Introductory Senior

Check enclosed, payable to: **National Audubon Society chapter T01/7XCH (please put on check)**

Please bill me

Mail to: National Audubon Society
Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 52529
Boulder, CO 80322

Please note T01/7XCH must be on check and envelope

\$10 Subscription to *Tulsa Scissortail* and local membership. Mail check to:

Tulsa Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2476

Metropolitan Environmental Trust's
Semi-Annual
**HOUSEHOLD POLLUTANT
COLLECTION EVENT**

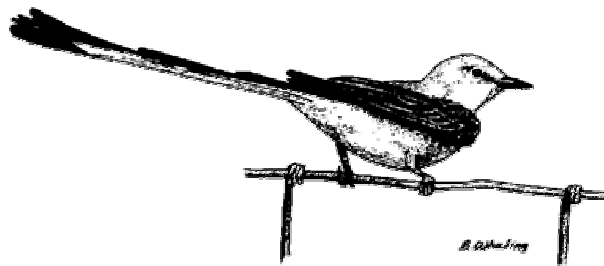
November 1-2, 2003
Gate 7 Tulsa Fairgrounds
10 A.M.-3 P.M. each day

Safely Dispose of household pollutants such as:

- Oil
- Antifreeze
- Pesticides
- Batteries
- Household Cleaners
- Smoke Alarms
- Bullets (50 caliber and smaller)
- Acids and Caustics
- Flammable household liquids

The twice-a-year Household Pollutant Collection events will no longer accept latex paint due to City of Tulsa budget cuts. They will continue to take oil-based paints, aerosols and specialty paints but not latex paint because it is relatively easy to dispose of without serious environmental harm.

Tulsa Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2476
Tulsa, OK 74101



Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Permit No. 2195

Please share your "Scissortail: with a friend and get them to join!"