

TULSA SCISSORTAIL

SUMMER 2006



TULSA
AUDUBON
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER
VOL. LXVII, NO. 4

EDITOR: PETER LOWEN

From the President

As another TAS year closes, I want to again thank all our members, committee members and officers for another excellent year of activities. We had great field trips, with many new members participating, as well as another set of excellent programs. Audubon At Home in Tulsa - Gardening For Wildlife continues to draw huge crowds to the annual backyard habitat tour. Our Eagle tours still draw people who have never seen an Eagle in the wild. Our Christmas and May Big Day Counts continue to collect valuable bird population data while introducing birding to many new birders. Thanks again to everyone for all you do for Audubon!

I want to welcome Anita Mitchell who has agreed to be our new Secretary, and Jim Mitchell who will serve on our Board of Directors. And of course we are grateful to all our other officers and Directors who will be serving again in their positions. Finally, thanks to our departing Secretary Cyndie Browning and Director Dave Edwards for your service. I know they will both remain very involved in TAS!

Mohawk Park Master Plan

As most of you know, TAS has been working to keep new development out of Mohawk Park, and the proposed soccer fields were moved north of the park to hwy. 75 and 56 Street North. During the recent vote in Tulsa to renew the third penny sales tax, funding for this new soccer complex was included. On behalf of TAS, I encouraged voters to support this, since the parks department did as we requested and moved the complex to an appropriate location. As you know, the extension did pass.

Forever Wild – 2006!

What a great concert!!! We had an excellent turn out of about 250 people for concert featuring Walkin' Jim Stoltz. This was an excellent result considering the short amount of time we had to publicize it, and the other entertainment options happening that same evening. If you could not make it out, I strongly encourage you to purchase some of his CDs or his book. Check out his website at www.walkinjim.com for lots more information. I hope that in a few years we can bring Jim back to Tulsa for another concert. This year his schedule was very tight, since he is visiting all 50 states giving a free concert. But normally when he comes to town for a concert he will be available for

several days to visit local schools, to sing and spread his message. I can't wait!

Audubon Council Update

Our March 4th meeting of Audubon Chapter leaders from across Oklahoma was a great success. We have decided to continue to work together, resurrecting the old Oklahoma Audubon Council, which had just faded away in the early 1990s. We are meeting again on July 22, at Oxley Nature Center.

Present at our June meeting was Connie Mahan from National Audubon's Washington, DC office, who provided us with some great information on what the NAS advocacy office is doing, and how we as chapters can help shape legislation (yes, even in Oklahoma!) Lynn Tennefoss, Vice President of NAS Chapter Services will be attending our July meeting.

We did decide to use the funding we have available from National Audubon to develop a PowerPoint presentation about the birds of Oklahoma which also includes information about what Audubon does to protect those birds. We are also working on establishing

President's Message cont'd on page 2

TAS Upcoming Events

Tuesday Morning Birders. The Tuesday Morning Birders meet at 7:30 am at the Tulsa Garden Center.

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

June

10-11 **Audubon at Home in Tulsa.** Your favorite Backyard Habitat Garden Tour is now sponsored by Tulsa Audubon. Tours 9am to 5pm Saturday and 12 to 5pm Sunday. For details contact Carol Eames at 918-446-2720.

24 Sat **Field Trip.** Chandler Park for summer birds. Meet at 7:30am Leader: Mary Jackson, 918-254-1350 or mkjackson@cox.net

July

15 Sat **Field Trip.** Osage Trail and Sperry area. Contact Jana Singletary at 918-627-8591 (cell 808-5554) or JsSingletary@sbcglobal.net for time and meeting place.

Baby Bird Portraits By George Miksch Sutton

Watercolors in the Field Museum
By Paul A. Johnsgard

Foreword by Benjamin W. Williams and William R. Johnson

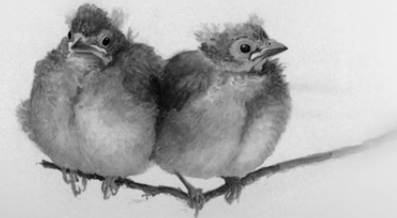
George Miksch Sutton is one of the best known and most beloved bird artists of the twentieth century. This marvelous book presents thirty-five paintings of downy chicks, nestlings, and fledglings painted from life by Sutton. The exquisite watercolors, housed in the Field Museum of Natural History, span three decades and depict nineteen species of North American birds. Many of the paintings are reproduced here for the first time.

In his introduction to the collection, ornithologist Paul Johnsgard discusses Sutton's contributions to bird art and to ornithology. And in essays accompanying the paintings, Johnsgard describes his and Sutton's personal encounters with the birds.

Sutton's sumptuous paintings and Johnsgard's enlightening text will redouble any reader's fascination and affinity for birds. --Booklist

Paul A. Johnsgard is Foundation Professor of Life Sciences at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. An internationally renowned ornithologist, he is the author of numerous books on birds. **Benjamin W. Williams** is Library Curator at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. **William R. Johnson** was Sutton's close friend for thirty years and is the trustee of the paintings collected in this volume.

Baby Bird Portraits by George Miksch Sutton



WATERCOLORS IN THE FIELD MUSEUM

Paul A. Johnsgard
Foreword by Benjamin W. Williams and William R. Johnson

cont'd from page 1
an Important Birds Area (IBA) program in Oklahoma, one of only two states in the nation that do not have an IBA program. Martin Brown has been researching what we need to do, and Donna Mackiewicz from Oklahoma City has some great ideas on funding and publicity. We'll be making some decisions in July on our next steps.

Kenneth Hayes

Long time Tulsa Audubon member Ken Hayes just passed away in late May at the

age of 98. Ken and Elizabeth, his late wife, were very active members of Tulsa Audubon, serving the Society in just about every capacity over the years. We will have a remembrance of Ken in the next Scissortail.

Eagle Preserve Property Taxes Paid

As you know, Tulsa Audubon owns property on a cove of Keystone Lake that is used as a roosting area by wintering Bald Eagles. Even though we are a non-profit group, we still need to pay property taxes. I want to thank TAS member Dody

Nesbit, who has generously paid that bill for us. In fact she has paid that bill every year on our behalf for as long as I can remember. Thank you Dody for your continued support!

As always, please contact me at 809-6325 or johnkennington@cox.net with any questions or concerns about Tulsa Audubon.

John Kennington

TULSA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS

President: John Kennington 809-6325 Vice-President: Gail Storey 742-2684
Secretary: Anita Mitchell Treasurer: Mary Jackson 254-1350
Recorder: Amy Lambert 272-4794, 747-4202

Directors: Martin Brown, Carol Eames, John Fisher, Tomye Mainer, Jim Mitchell, Brandon Scott

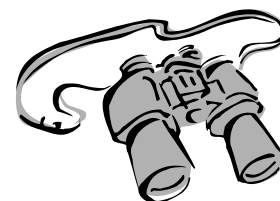
TAS Website: <http://www.tulsaaudubon.org>

"Tulsa Scissortail" is the quarterly newsletter of the Tulsa Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2476, Tulsa, OK 74101. 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 Fall 2006, that will be August 11th or so).

e-mail: thelowenfamily@sbcglobal.net

Peter Lowen, Editor

Recorder's Report February through May 2006



Recorder: Amy Lambert Mail: 12006 E. 80th Street North
 lambert.a@sbcglobal.net Owasso, OK 74055
 Amy Lambert 272-4794 or Pat Seibert 747-4202

	Species	Date	Count	Location	Observer
R	Mute Swan	28-Feb-06	1	Skiatook Area	D & R John
F	Least Bittern	26-Apr-06	1	Apache Sewage Pond	B.Carrell
F	Little Blue Heron	08-Apr-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
R	White-faced Ibis	30-Apr-06	1	Bixby Sod Farm	L.McRill
R	White-faced Ibis	30-Apr-06	7	56th St N Sod Farms	B. Carrell/T. Mitchell
F	Osprey	02-Apr-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
F	Broad-winged Hawk	30-Apr-06	2	North Tulsa County	P.Seibert
R	Peregrine Falcon	10-May-06	1	Bixby Sod Farm	J.Arterburn
F	Sora	25-Apr-06	3	Oxley Nature Center	M.Peterson
R	Common Moorhen	13-May-06	1	Apache Sewage Pond	J.Cox
F	American Golden-Plover	21-Mar-06	1	South Tulsa County	J.Loyd
F	American Avocet	24-Apr-06	150	Lake Yahola	B. Carrell/T. Mitchell
F	Willet	24-Apr-06	2	Lake Yahola	B. Carrell/T. Mitchell
F	Upland Sandpiper	02-Apr-06	2	Bixby Sod Farm	G.Kamp
R	Whimbrel	05-May-06	1	Bixby Sod Farm	J.Arterburn
F	Ruddy Turnstone	10-May-06	1	Leonard Sod Farms	J.Arterburn
O	Sanderling	01-Apr-06	2	Keystone Area	J.Woodward
F	Western Sandpiper	29-Apr-06	1	Bixby Sod Farm	J.Arterburn
F	Dunlin	29-Apr-06	1	Bixby Sod Farm	T.Mitchell
F	Stilt Sandpiper	01-Apr-06	4	Keystone Area	J.Woodward
F	Short-billed Dowitcher	10-May-06	145	Bixby Sod Farm	J.Arterburn
F	Long-billed Dowitcher	29-Apr-06	6	56th St N Sod Farms	T.Mitchell
F	Least Tern	13-May-06	1	31st St. Bike Trail to Riverside	G.Kamp
R	Eurasian Collared-Dove	28-Feb-06	4	41st St & SW Blvd	W.Whaling
F	Chimney Swift	01-Apr-06	3	Residence, Tulsa	P.Seibert
F	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	10-Apr-06	1	Skiatook Area	D & R John
F	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	02-Apr-06	1	Bixby Sod Farm	C.Browning
R	Plumbeous Vireo	27-Apr-06	1	Woodward Park	P.Seibert
F	Sedge Wren	25-Apr-06	2	Oxley Nature Center	M.Peterson
R	Veery	07-May-06	1	Residence, Tulsa	M&G Kamp
F	Gray-cheeked Thrush	26-Apr-06	1	Woodward Park	J.Loyd
O	Gray Catbird	02-Apr-06	1	Residence, Tulsa	C.Browning
F	Chestnut-sided Warbler	11-May-06	1	31st St. Bike Trail to Riverside	G.Kamp
F	Magnolia Warbler	11-May-06	1	31st St. Bike Trail to Riverside	G.Kamp
F	Blackburnian Warbler	07-May-06	1	31st St. Bike Trail to Riverside	T.Mitchell
R	Pine Warbler	26-Feb-06	2	Keystone Dam	P.Ribitzki
R	Pine Warbler	28-Feb-06	1	Keystone Area	J.Singleary
F	Prothonotary Warbler	08-Apr-06	3	Lake Yahola	T.Mitchell
F	Canada Warbler	13-May-06	1	31st St. Bike Trail to Riverside	G.Kamp
F	Yellow-breasted Chat	22-Apr-06	1	Redbud Valley (Rogers Cty)	T.Mitchell
F	Summer Tanager	18-Apr-06	2	Redbud Valley (Rogers Cty)	S.Ruby
F	Scarlet Tanager	16-Apr-06	1	Ancient Forrest	J.Fisher
F	Clay-colored Sparrow	26-Apr-06	6	Woodward Park	T.Mitchell
L	Dark-eyed Junco	08-Apr-06	35	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
F	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	30-Apr-06	1	Woodward Park	P.Seibert
F	Dickcissel	18-Apr-06	1	Residence, Tulsa	T.Mitchell
F	Bobolink	29-Apr-06	2	Bixby Sod Farm	Loyd/Seibert
F	Yellow-headed Blackbird	09-Apr-06	1	Skiatook Area	D & R John

O = Out of Date R = Rare C=Chicks F=First L=Last N=Notable

TULSA AUDUBON SOCIETY 2006 SPRING COUNT Jo Loyd

The 2006 spring count was conducted Saturday, May 6th with 31 people participating for the day. The day began with a steady rain early morning and continued with intermittent light rain for most of the day. The species total for the day was 169 with 19,109 individual birds tallied. Dark-eyed Juncos and Yellow-rumped Warblers were not found, but 19 species of warblers were listed. Species and numbers are as follows:

Canada Goose, 292	Pectoral Sandpiper, 53	Fish Crow, 28	Louisiana Waterthr., 14
Wood Duck, 44	Dunlin, 4	Horned Lark, 3	Kentucky Warbler, 3
Gadwall, 2	Stilt Sandpiper, 1	Purple Martin, 297	Common Yellowthr., 29
Mallard, 116	Long billed Dowitcher, 27	Tree Swallow, 20	Wilson's Warbler, 5
Blue winged Teal, 141	Wilson's Phalarope, 3	Northern Rough winged Swallow, 133	Yellow breasted Chat, 1
Green winged Teal, 3	Franklin's Gull, 1964	Bank Swallow, 28	Summer Tanager, 33
Lesser Scaup, 12	Ring billed Gull, 58	Cliff Swallow, 2098	Chipping Sparrow, 144
Wild Turkey, 2	Herring Gull, 2	Barn Swallow, 1699	Clay colored Sparrow, 94
Northern Bobwhite, 9	Caspian Tern, 15	Carolina Chickadee, 179	Field Sparrow, 29
Common Loon, 2	Forster's Tern, 9	Tufted Titmouse, 105	Vesper Sparrow, 2
Pied billed Grebe, 4	Black Tern, 4	White breasted Nuthatch, 5	Lark Sparrow, 9
American White Pelican, 28	Rock Pigeon, 183	Brown Creeper, 1	Savannah Sparrow, 74
Double crested Cormorant, 27	Eurasian Collared Dove, 9	Carolina Wren, 121	Grasshopper Sparrow, 3
Great Blue Heron, 133	Mourning Dove, 218	Bewick's Wren, 1	Song Sparrow, 13
Great Egret, 139	Yellow billed Cuckoo, 7	House Wren, 10	Lincoln's Sparrow, 46
Snowy Egret, 15	Barred Owl, 11	Marsh Wren, 4	White throated Sparrow, 14
Little Blue Heron, 8	Common Nighthawk, 3	Ruby crowned Kinglet, 7	Harris' Sparrow, 8
Cattle Egret, 67	Chuck will's widow, 11	Blue gray Gnatcatcher, 113	White crowned Sparrow, 28
Green Heron, 8	Chimney Swift, 226	Eastern Bluebird, 118	Northern Cardinal, 441
Yellow crowned Night Heron, 5	Ruby throated Hummingbird, 15	Gray cheeked Thrush, 2	Rose breasted Grosbeak, 11
White faced Ibis, 3	Belted Kingfisher, 9	Swainson's Thrush, 162	Blue Grosbeak, 27
Black Vulture, 1	Red headed Woodpecker, 8	Hermit Thrush, 62	Indigo Bunting, 192
Turkey Vulture, 18	Red bellied Woodpecker, 35	Wood Thrush, 1	Painted Bunting, 43
Mississippi Kite, 3	Downy Woodpecker, 57	American Robin, 348	Dickcissel, 856
Bald Eagle, 2	Hairy Woodpecker, 10	Gray Catbird, 30	Bobolink, 22
Cooper's Hawk, 1	Northern Flicker, 20	Northern Mockingbird, 258	Red winged Blackbird, 671
Red shouldered Hawk, 24	Pileated Woodpecker, 9	Brown Thrasher, 57	East. Meadowlark, 276
Broad winged Hawk, 1	Eastern Wood Pewee, 15	European Starling, 1866	Yellow headed Blackbird, 22
Swainson's Hawk, 2	Acadian Flycatcher, 2	Cedar Waxwing, 396	Common Grackle, 535
Red tailed Hawk, 16	Least Flycatcher, 24	Tennessee Warbler, 24	Great tailed Grackle, 68
American Kestrel, 3	Eastern Phoebe, 78	Orange crowned Warbler, 5	Brown headed Cowbird, 497
Sora, 4	Great Crested Flycatcher, 84	Nashville Warbler, 36	Orchard Oriole, 9
American Coot, 13	Western Kingbird, 57	Northern Parula, 30	Baltimore Oriole, 57
Black bellied Plover, 2	Eastern Kingbird, 212	Yellow Warbler, 78	House Finch, 69
Killdeer, 100	Scissor tailed Flycatcher, 192	Chestnut sided Warbler, 1	American Goldfinch, 128
Greater Yellowlegs, 20	Loggerhead Shrike, 4	Black throated Green Warbler, 1	House Sparrow, 622
Lesser Yellowlegs, 41	White eyed Vireo, 23	Yellow throated Warbler, 8	TOTAL BIRDS, 19109
Solitary Sandpiper, 19	Bell's Vireo, 18	Blackpoll Warbler, 30	NO. OF SPECIES, 169
Spotted Sandpiper, 66	Yellow throated Vireo, 3	Black and white Warbler, 16	
Upland Sandpiper, 9	Blue headed Vireo, 5	American Redstart, 7	
Hudsonian Godwit, 1	Warbling Vireo, 50	Prothonotary Warb., 16	
Semip. Sandpiper, 19	Philadelphia Vireo, 1	Ovenbird, 4	
Least Sandpiper, 47	Red eyed Vireo, 42	Northern Waterthr., 9	
White rumped Sandpiper, 15	Blue Jay, 95		
Baird's Sandpiper, 29	American Crow, 205		

March 2006 - Everything's Bigger in...

by Peter Lowen

With our proximity to the large, red state to the south, I may have been the last Tulsa Audubon Society member who hadn't birded in Texas. I had not stayed away for political reasons, but rather for professional ones. Two days before a planned trip in April 2004, I accepted a teaching position for the remainder of the school year (that's another story). It took two years to re-plan the torpedoed trip, and over my Spring Break this March I finally made it to the Promised Land, the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

While planning the trip with friends from Rhode Island, I was told by veterans that I'd need at least a week to do the Valley properly. Hopefully, they told me, I could devote two weeks or more and cover the area comprehensively. Naturally, I had a full three days.

The Holiday Inn Express in Pharr, immediately east of McAllen was perfect for our base of operations. On our first morning, we three novice Texas birders started at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park in a steady rain. We chased a possible Least Grebe along a canal path for 10 minutes before finally identifying a Pied-billed Grebe. I quickly realized that we would actually have to work to get life birds here in Texas. I had had the impression that every tree and bush was home to a different exotic species that would thrill and delight us.

After making it back to the entrance and hitting the feeding station, we finally found some authentic idiot-proof Texas birds – Chachalaca, Altamira Oriole, Green Jay, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Long-billed Thrasher, and White-tipped Dove. In five minutes we were inundated with a half-dozen life birds, not to mention more rain. We walked for about four miles within the park and saw little else. The famed Trailer Loop gave us some shabby Indigo Buntings in mixed plumage, and we got a lot wetter. Back at the car, the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail (GTCBT) map directed us to the McAllen Sewage Ponds for water birds and shorebirds. After arriving and checking in at the office as directed,

we were told it was too wet and dangerous and please come back another day.

We decided to stick with the GTCBT map for a while longer, and found ourselves at the Hidalgo Pumphouse, close to the Rio Grande. We found Black-bellied Whistling Duck immediately and our spirits rose. Then even better, the rain stopped. We walked the trail from the Pumphouse to the river surrounded by good bird habitat – forest edges, clearings, brush piles and plenty of puddles. My companions were thrilled to see a trio of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and we all enjoyed a pair of cooperative Olive Sparrows. Next came the Couch's Kingbird calling from a low branch and we felt fantastic.

During our driving, I slowly came to realize the power of our GTCBT map. Each section of the map is a planned loop that can be followed in a day or two, much like the Holt/Lane Birdfinding guides. The map has matching color codes for the numbered sites on the front side of the map and the descriptions on the back. Even better were the road signs announcing a GTCBT site with the same number as our map. This is a level of sophistication I'd not seen before to get birders where they want to go. Birders must contribute significantly to the local economy to warrant this level of organizational effort to accommodate and assist us. I was impressed.

At that point, we realized that the map was to be treated like a pirate's treasure map. Although after 3 days of heavy use most of the creases were half-torn, we knew it was our best friend in Texas. We also had the Holt/Lane guide at our fingertips but the GTCBT map was much easier to use.

We followed it to the Santa Ana NWR. The trails had turned to muddy gumbo from the rain, and stuck tenaciously to our shoes. I was easily 2 inches taller when I left the refuge. I learned that in Texas, a low area that can potentially hold water is called a "pond".

Then we headed back to McAllen and eventually found the Edinburgh World Birding Site, and had great success. We paid a fee to enter and set up our scopes on a legitimate pond ringed with wonderfully mature trees and plenty of dead snags.

There we tallied 6 herons, a Neotropic Cormorant and a Least Grebe (my 500th lifer!). After scoping for about 15 minutes, our diligence paid off with a Green Kingfisher, an absolute gem of a bird! I walked the botanic gardens and saw a fleeting glimpse of a Buff-bellied Hummingbird, just the minimum time to see a dark hummer and notice the belly was in fact buff-colored. My companions walked to another pond and got a 10-minute look at a Sora, of which I quite literally only saw the tail-end.

The next day we drove east to see the Brownsville Dump (no crows), the utterly fantastic Sabal Palm Grove Audubon Center, South Padre Island (Harris' Hawk!), and Harlingen.

For our final day of Birding we headed west towards Falcon Dam. Along the way we missed the Brown Jays of Chapeño and then got skunked at the overgrown Santa Margarita Ranch. We could hear the river and birds, but we sure couldn't see through the brush. Then the birding gods sent us to Salineño for a reprieve. We sat in the lawn chairs and chatted about everything avian with other birders. The incredibly friendly and helpful couple who run the site told us to wait patiently for the Audubon's Oriole, as they had just left and usually cycled back every half hour. Sure enough, 30 minutes later two popped up from nowhere to feed at the myriad feeders provided. When I asked why the grackles didn't come in for a meal the wife slyly showed me her slingshot and small stones. She also told me how she makes her own suet: rendered fat, cornmeal, and peanut butter. The birds loved it.

At trip's end we concluded that one week is a good minimum amount of time to bird the lower Rio Grande, but if you only have three days to bird in Texas, take it.



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

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Membership Data Center
P.O. Box 52529
Boulder, CO 80322

T01/7XCH must be on check and envelope

OR, for only Tulsa Audubon Society
\$10 Local membership - includes

Tulsa Scissortail. Mail check to:
Tulsa Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2476
Tulsa, OK 74101

**Good People of
Tulsa Audubon**

This is a plea from your humble editor to provide me with some things I could really use. As I toil on these newsletters I feel like I'm working in a vacuum.

Please provide me some feedback, either positive or constructive, so I can find out what content you like or dislike, or what you feel should be in this newsletter that currently is not.

Also, if you have a spectacular wildlife event, Big Day, upcoming event, or other related news that you'd like to share with 700+ interested folks, please send me an account and I'd be happy to include it if possible.

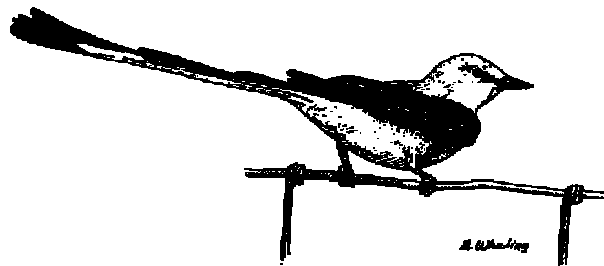
Many thanks,

Peter Lowen
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**Tulsa
Audubon
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Please share your "Scissortail" with friends and encourage them to join!