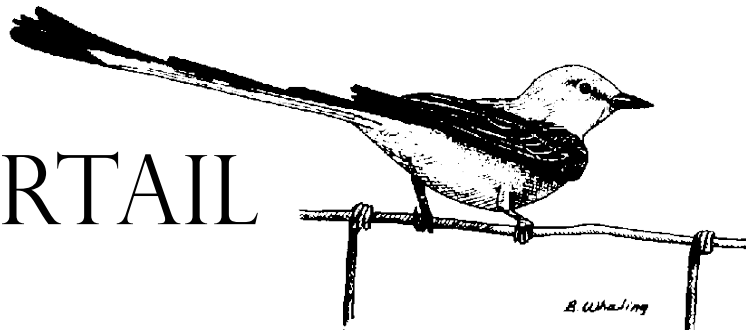


# TULSA SCISSORTAIL



TULSA  
AUDUBON  
SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER  
VOL. LXVIII, NO. 2

WINTER 2007

EDITOR: PETER LOWEN

## *From the President*

Be sure to read Tulsa Audubon's statement on The Channels project starting on page 4 in this newsletter. During the last few months, Bob Gard and I represented TAS on the Arkansas River Advisory Committee. The committee, part of INCOG, was originally formed to offer advice on the River Master Plan developed over the last several years. Now the committee has formed several subcommittees to review different aspects of The Channels proposal, and made a recommendation if it should be incorporated into the existing master plan. If that happens, then the county would likely schedule a vote on funding.

It has been an interesting experience hearing from the consultants and hearing the concerns of the committee members. As of this writing, the subcommittees have finished their work, but the full committee has not yet reached a decision on what to recommend. Based on what I heard, most members of the subcommittees had many legitimate concerns, and feel it should not be included as is. But the final decision will be made by a steering committee, and we'll see what impact politics has on their decision.

Please read our statement, but the bottom line is that we do not support the project for a variety of reasons.

In other news, our new meeting schedule of serving snacks starting at 7:00 seems to be a success, along with our new name tags. Everyone is also welcome to join us each month at Pepper's Grill at 5:15 for dinner with that month's speaker.

Finally, I send out a monthly email update on TAS activities. If you would like to receive it, please email me at [johnkennington@cox.net](mailto:johnkennington@cox.net)

*John Kennington*

## TAS Upcoming Events

**Tuesday Morning Birders.** The Tuesday Morning Birders meet at 8:00 am at the Tulsa Garden Center from September through March.

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

### December

**2 Sat Field Trip.** Deep Fork WMA in Okmulgee for winter sparrows and waterfowl. Meet at 8:30am in the Walmart parking lot in Okmulgee, on Hwy 75. For more info, contact Gail Storey, 918-742-2684.

**16 Sat Christmas Bird Count.** Tulsa Audubon Society will be participating in the 106th count by the National Audubon Society. For information contact Jo Loyd, 918-835-2946.

**19 Tue Society Meeting, 7:30 p.m.** Annual Christmas Show and Tell Party. Attendees are invited to bring stories, slides, or digital presentations (up to about 10) on any subject of general interest (travel, birds, wildflowers, etc.) to share with the group. Members bring treats to share after the meeting. Please contact Gail

Storey, 742-2684 about your presentation. Please bring your digital photos on a CD or flash drive.

### January

**6 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 Dave Edwards, 865-7398.

**14 Sun Eagle Days.** See January 6 information.

**16 Tue Society Meeting, 7:30 p.m.** - Biodiversity and Germplasm Conservation with Angela Davis. The speaker, a research geneticist at the USDA's South Central Agricultural Research Lab, will share her unique perspective on protecting our natural resources.

**20 Sat Field Trip.** Hefner and Overholser Lakes in OKC for gulls, etc. Rendezvous point to be announced. For more info, contact Jim Arterburn at 481-5077.

*(cont'd on page 2)*

## Upcoming Events

(from page 1)

### February

**10 Sat Field Trip.** Lake Tenkiller for loons and wintering waterfowl. Rendezvous point to be announced. For more info contact Jim Arterburn at 481-5077.

**11 Sun Afternoon Outing.** A short visit to a local birding area. Meet 4:00 p.m. at the Tulsa Garden Center. Contact John Kennington at 918-809-6325.

**20 Tue Society Meeting 7:30 p.m..** Lepidoptera and Lepidopterists in Oklahoma with John Nelson. An acclaimed scientist will recount the major contributors to the knowledge of butterflies and moths in the state, along with his own involvement in the field.

### March

**20 Tue Society Meeting 7:30 p.m..** Birds of Bosque del Apache with Ron Day. A celebrated wildlife photographer will share his images of cranes, geese, ducks, and other birds of the beautiful Refuge in southern New Mexico. Be sure to visit his web site at <http://www.rondayphotography.com>

**31 Sat Field Trip.** Tallgrass Prairie for Greater Prairie-Chickens. Rendezvous point to be announced. For more info, contact Cyndie Browning 918-492-5622.

*Please note that society meetings will formally begin at 7:30pm, and you are welcome any time after 7:00pm to enjoy snacks and good company.*

The Oklahoma Audubon Council IBA Steering Committee is pleased to announce Eric Beck as the first Oklahoma Important Bird Areas Program Coordinator.

Eric Beck resides in Lawton, OK with his wife Melissa and daughter Walden Wren Beck. (With a name like that she is destined for greatness.) Eric is currently enrolled at Cameron University where he is pursuing a biology degree.

He has worked for the Sutton Avian Research center on their Lesser Prairie Chicken research and is currently working with them on the Oklahoma Winter Bird Atlas project.

With your support, I am sure that Eric will greatly advance the OK IBA program in the coming year.

Martin Brown  
Chair - OK IBA Steering Committee

## Such is Life

Two or three years ago, I wrote an editorial about the joys of birding on the small scale, the neighborhood. One of the small delights was knowing not just which trees would hold which species, but which individual bird preferred a particular perch.

A mockingbird on my route always waited like a sentinel on the lowest power line just past the second pole to the west of my development. I imagined we had a rather cor-

dial relationship, and mentally said hello and goodbye each time I walked or drove by him. It was always comforting and amusing to see him at his post.

While driving home from school one day in October, I noticed a ball of gray and white feathers just off the road by the second pole and nobody waiting to see me on the lowest power line. The line is still empty and each day I notice his absence, and I still quietly salute his empty spot. Birding the neighborhood has become a little more personal to me.

### 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, Jim Mitchell, Brandon Scott, and Gary Siftar

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

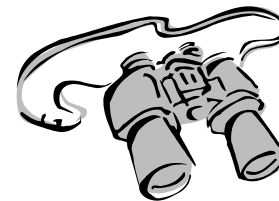
"*Tulsa Scissortail*" is the quarterly newsletter of the Tulsa Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2476, Tulsa, OK 74101. As the "Scissortail" newsletter goes to the printer two weeks before the date of issue, your editor needs items for that issue at least a week prior to that (For Spring 2007, that will be February 10th or so).

e-mail: [thelowenfamily@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thelowenfamily@sbcglobal.net)

Peter Lowen, Editor

# Recorder's Report August - September 2006

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



Species	Date	Count	Location	Observer
O Gadwall	15-Aug-06	1	Mohawk Park	J.Loyd, et al
O Northern Shoveler	21-Aug-06	1	Keystone Area	T.Curtis
R Surf Scoter	19-Oct-06	1	Lake Yahola	B.Carrell
R Surf Scoter	04-Nov-06	1	Lynn Lane Reservoir	J.Arterburn
R Black Scoter	12-Nov-06	1	Lynn Lane Reservoir	J.Arterburn
O Horned Grebe	19-Sep-06	2	Mohawk Park	J.Loyd, et al
R Western Grebe	23-Oct-06	1	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	T.Curtis
R Black Vulture	25-Sep-06	11	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	T.Mitchell
Osprey	15-Sep-06	1	Lake Yahola	J.Singletary
Bald Eagle	24-Jun-06	1	Lake Keystone, Walnut Creek	M.Brown
Immature Bald Eagle	04-Nov-06	2	Eagle Roost	B.Gard
Adult Bald Eagle	04-Nov-06	7	Eagle Roost	B.Gard
Ferruginous Hawk	26-Oct-06	1	South Tulsa County	L.McRill
Ferruginous Hawk	13-Nov-06	1	Hwy51/Keystone	T.Curtis
Merlin	03-Nov-06	1	Residence, Sand Springs	F.Sanford
R Peregrine Falcon	28-Aug-06	1	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	M&G Kamp
R Peregrine Falcon	02-Oct-06	1	Down Town Tulsa	J.Arterburn
R Peregrine Falcon	03-Nov-06	1	Arkansas River	T.Curtis
Virginia Rail	23-Sep-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
R Sandhill Crane	14-Jul-06	2	Skiatook Area	D & R John
O Marbled Godwit	25-Sep-06	1	Lake Keystone, Osage Point	T.Mitchell
O Sanderling	27-Oct-06	2	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	J.Arterburn
O Buff-breasted Sandpiper	29-Jul-06	47	Leonard Sod Farms	J.Arterburn
R Little Gull	23-Oct-06	1	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	T.Curtis
O Bonaparte's Gull	13-Oct-06	1	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	T.Curtis
O Bonaparte's Gull	19-Oct-06	30	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	T.Curtis
R Sabine's Gull	19-Sep-06	2	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	S.Metz
R Common Tern	28-Aug-06	1	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	M&G Kamp
R Common Tern	04-Oct-06	8	Keystone, Cowskin Bay*	J.Arterburn
Least Tern	19-Jun-06	40	Ark River at 15th St	J.Loyd
O Winter Wren	19-Sep-06	1	Mohawk Park	J.Loyd, et al
O Marsh Wren	19-Sep-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	B.Carrell
O Ruby-crowned Kinglet	13-Jun-06	1	Keystone Dam & Arkansas River	B.Germany, et al
O Ruby-crowned Kinglet	02-Sep-06	1	Ark River at 31st St	J.Loyd
O Nashville Warbler	14-Aug-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
O Nashville Warbler	02-Nov-06	1	Williams Center Green	J.Arterburn
O Yellow-rumped Warbler	23-Sep-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	T.Mitchell
R Pine Warbler	13-Jun-06	4	Keystone Dam & Arkansas River	B.Germany, et al
O Ovenbird	01-Sep-06	1	Williams Center Green	J.Arterburn
Summer Tanager	13-Jun-06	2	Keystone Dam & Arkansas River	B.Germany, et al
R Lark Bunting	17-Sep-06	5	Skiatook Area	D & R John
O Song Sparrow	23-Sep-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	B.Carrell
O Lincoln's Sparrow	19-Sep-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	B.Carrell
O Swamp Sparrow	23-Sep-06	1	Oxley Nature Center	B.Carrell

**O = Out of Date R = Rare**

## Statement of the Tulsa Audubon Society on The Channels

The Tulsa Audubon Society is very concerned about the impact of The Channels on our Least Terns, Bald Eagles, and other wildlife as well as river habitats. The plan as presented to the public was very short on details, leaving the Tulsa Audubon Society little on which to comment. The consultants to Tulsa Stakeholders claim they have taken these environmental and other concerns into account and addressed them, and we planned to make an assessment when we learned the details.

TAS has been serving on the Arkansas River Advisory Committee for the last several years, and that committee met with the project consultants to ask questions, receive answers and learn the details of the plan. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, we received answers from The Channels consultants concerning the environmental issues raised by the group.

Having studied their assessment, our concerns have not been fully addressed.

We are not against river development, and strongly support the Arkansas River Master Plan that was recently developed. That plan was developed by the Corps of Engineers and INCOG with extensive input from the community. They put together the Arkansas River Master Plan Advisory Committee, and Tulsa Audubon was involved in that planning.

The current Master Plan is very well thought out and recognizes the intrinsic value that the Arkansas River already brings to Tulsa. Because of extensive input from the community, they developed an excellent plan, balancing the natural features of the river with the develop-

ment needs of the community. You can get more information about the master plan at [www.incog.org/ark%20river/default.htm](http://www.incog.org/ark%20river/default.htm)

The Channels is based on the premise that Tulsa is an undesirable place to live, especially for young professionals, and that this project will provide an attractive public meeting place near the water. Economic development is not our area of expertise, but there will be many negative impacts from this project. Most would result from the conversion of a free-flowing stream to a shallow 12-mile long lake. These are some of the aspects of the river that would likely be impacted:

- Fish spawning and migration
- Use of the riverbank as a corridor by land-based wildlife
- Least Terns, an endangered species - (New nesting islands are planned, but the lake would destroy foraging areas)
- Sediment transport
- Water quality (toxins accumulate more readily in relatively still waters)
- Bald eagles, a threatened species (especially if wind turbines on the riverbank are included)

Aesthetics – Many feel a flowing stream is more beautiful than a pond, and it is simply not possible to mitigate the loss of a twelve-mile stretch of prairie river "in kind" - it is irreplaceable. Yes, the river is already compromised and its natural state altered by the Keystone Dam, but it does retain valuable natural characteristic that would be lost if this project proceeds.

*(cont'd on page 5)*

(from page 4)

Other successful water-based recreation areas have indeed helped to revitalize areas in cities like San Antonio, Oklahoma City, Vancouver, etc., but these were not produced by destroying natural areas. Instead they usually were built in undesirable, industrial areas that were not the home of an endangered species such as the Least Tern.

The responses to the Advisory Committee from the consultants were sketchy or insufficient. The details will seemingly be worked out during the design phase of the project, after a proposed bond election (and after all consultants have been paid.) Is this really good planning?

For instance, there are plans and budget to construct new islands for the Least Terns. But for the islands to be used by the terns they must be located near shallow water feeding areas. But no details about how this will be accomplished have been developed. The plan is to study this issue and handle it in the design phase. This leaves TAS nothing to assess at this time since the consultants have not fully addressed this issue. We don't know if it will work, and we don't know what it will cost.

Unfortunately, doing detailed studies and modeling in the design phase is their answer to almost all the concerns about this project. For instance, they plan to spend

nine months creating a detailed ground-water model of the project. That is certainly necessary, but the plan we may be asked to vote on is based on optimistic guesses about what this model will show. They have even stated they are still "researching flow volume and cost to validate our order of magnitude costs." In other word, they have yet to determine if their cost estimates are even in the ballpark.

The entire budget of the project is an optimistic guess. They plan to work out the details in engineering studies and modeling AFTER the election. These studies could result in hundreds of millions of dollars of additional expense. The project may even found to be not physically feasible as currently envisioned, wasting more tax dollars. Therefore, we cannot endorse this project since there are far too many unknowns, assumptions and guesses about specific design elements and costs.

Many comprehensive studies from the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and independent engineering, environmental and biological consultants need to be completed. These then should be brought back to the Advisory Committee for review to assess the whole project and its economic and ecological impact upon Tulsa. Once completed, this project may or may not prove to be feasible. At this time it, it is premature to send this issue to the voters.

### **All Work and no Play...**

Last Spring, a friend asked if I'd been out birding lately. As a schoolteacher with lots of papers to grade, lessons to plan, and quizzes and tests to write, I replied that there's no time. Quite amazed, she responded, "Well, are you not going to bird until you retire?" I chuckled, "Of course not."

Well, since then, I've been out birding for one glorious day in May, and a morning in June. Sigh. Here it is wintertime and my year list is still under 200, including a 3-day trip to

the lower Rio Grande Valley. I'm obviously doing something wrong.

It's easy to rationalize that gas is expensive (and a luxury), I have a family, there are chores and projects and paperwork that all need attention, and of course there is always schoolwork. Luckily, there's always next year.

In 2007, I resolve to bird more often, to keep that interest kindled, and to have fun doing it. I encourage you to do the same and I hope to see you out there.

*Editor*

**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

**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

**Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye!**

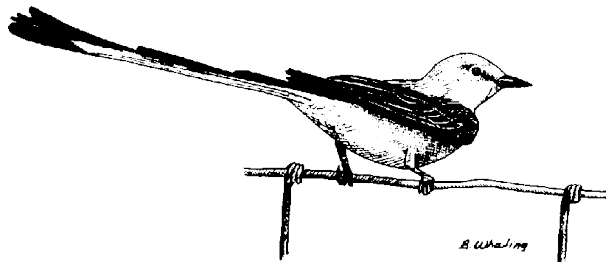
**The 107th National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count is being conducted Saturday, December 16, 2006. Don't miss out on this opportunity!**

**Telephone Jo Loyd at 918-835-2946 or e-mail her at [jo.loyd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jo.loyd@sbcglobal.net) to sign up with a team.**

**There will be a \$5 fee for all participants over the age of 18. (So bring along your kids or grandchildren.) Help make the big 1-0-7 a success!**



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



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*Please share your "Scissortail" with friends and encourage them to join!*