

GOAS *Scissortail*

Greater Ozarks Audubon Society Newsletter :: February 2015 :: Volume 38 Issue 2

DR. RUTH REPORTS

Ruth Grant, GOAS Chapter President

Ornithological Eponyms

An eponym is a person from whom something such as a place, a disease or a bird takes its name. Hence, Hodgkin's Lymphoma takes its name from Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, an English physician and pathologist who first described seven cases of the illness in 1832.

Audubon, Nuttall, Wilson, Bonaparte, Say, Gambel, Steller, Lewis and Swainson are all ornithological eponyms: people for whom birds have been named. If we investigate these names we can learn some of the rich history of nineteenth century ornithologists and naturalists.

Alexander Wilson (1766-1813) who gave his name to Wilson's storm-petrel, plover, phalarope, snipe and warbler, was born in Scotland and trained as a weaver. He immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1794, where he met another famous American naturalist, William Bartram, who encouraged Wilson's interest in birds.

Wilson traveled, collected and painted, producing a nine volume "American Ornithology" (1808-1814). His work depicted 268 birds, of which 26 were new to science. He is considered the father of American ornithology. His work can be accessed online at biodiversitylibrary.org. Harvard University Press just published a new biography of him in 2013.

Charles Lucien Bonaparte (Bonaparte's Gull) was a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte who traveled to the United States in 1822. On the voyage he collected a new storm-petrel which he subsequently

named in honor of Alexander Wilson. He studied the ornithology of the United States and revised and updated Wilson's "American Ornithology" (1825-1833), before returning to Europe. Towards the end of his life he began work on a methodical classification of all the birds of the world "Conspectus Generum Avium." He gave his wife's name Zenaida to the genus of doves which includes the Mourning Dove, *Zenaida macroura*. Interestingly, he was also an ardent republican, not a monarchist, although he had a royal title.

Thomas Nuttall was a distinguished English botanist and zoologist who lived and worked in the United States from 1808 through 1841. Numerous marine species, plants, and birds honor him in their scientific names, including Nuttall's Woodpecker, *Picoides nuttalli*, named by William Gambel, and Common Poorwill, *Phalaenoptilus nuttali*, named by Audubon.

Nuttall accompanied two western expeditions, one duplicating some of Lewis and Clark's travels. Many of their specimens had been lost, so his collections were important. His second trip reached the Hawaiian islands.

He also recruited the young medical student Thomas Gambel (Gambel's Quail) to collect specimens for him in California. Through his work for Nuttall, Gambel became the father of California ornithology. Unfortunately Dr. Gambel died at 27 while ministering to gold rush miners ill with typhoid.

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FEBRUARY CALENDAR

GOAS BOARD MEETING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10th

7:00 p.m. Environmental Resource Center

GOAS MEMBERSHIP MEETING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19th

7:00 p.m. Program

Springfield Conservation Nature Center

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YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE

GREATER OZARKS CHAPTER

OF THE

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership in the National Audubon Society includes:

- ◆ Affiliation with Greater Ozarks Audubon
- ◆ Eight issues of the **GOAS Scissortail**
- ◆ Four issues of **Audubon** magazine

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Get the **Scissortail** in your inbox!

Contact Mary Sturdevant, GOAS Membership Chair with questions, or Jim Fossard, Secretary, if you want to receive the newsletter by mail.

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Representing:
Cedar, Christian, Dallas, Douglas, Greene,
Hickory, Polk, St. Clair, Stone, Taney,
Webster, and Wright Counties in Missouri.

Our mission is to promote bird conservation in southwest Missouri through birdwatching, education, habitat preservation and restoration, and public awareness, for the benefit of humanity and wildlife.

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18th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

When: Friday-Monday, Feb 13-16
Where: Your yard, a park, a conservation area, all of these, and more. Or, join GOAS at the Nature Center on Friday and Saturday, 9:00-11:00 am. Submit your count data to eBird!

Learn More



BIRDATHON PLANNING PIZZA PARTY

Mark your calendars for a new, fun event for GOAS! Thursday, March 6, at 6:00pm, we will meet at the Nature Center for a free pizza and drink meal! This will be the kickoff for organizing our annual Birdathon fundraiser. Birdathon is an event we do in April or May to raise money for GLADE and Audubon Adventures, our education programs. We solicit our families, friends, neighbors and other GOAS members to monetarily support our efforts at finding birds on our Birdathon day. Some donors offer a per bird donation, while others pledge a set amount. Packets of helpful sample letters and other documents will be furnished to make your soliciting easy. Groups get together to go out and bird for a day, and have fun. You do NOT have to be an outstanding birder to participate because the team works together to find as many species as possible. The team raising the most money will win a special weekend at a cabin. Prizes are available to other teams as well. This is a fun competition among friends. Everyone who is considering participating in Birdathon should come for this event.



THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM...

Identifying The Birds Of Western Missouri By Sight And By Sound

John C. Robinson began birding in Missouri in 1980 and is a 2011 Toyota-TogetherGreen Fellow. An award-winning ornithologist and best-selling author, he has led bird-watching and natural history tours to exotic locations in Tennessee, Texas, Arizona, Ohio, Canada, California, and South Africa. In tonight's presentation, he will share his experiences as a beginning birder in northwest Missouri, discuss his current work with Toyota and National Audubon that helps connect minority and inner city youth and young adults with nature, and review key techniques for identifying the birds of western Missouri by sight and by sound. This program is cosponsored by the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society. Ages 12-adult. Registration required; call 888-4237 to register. Dr. Robinson will present two additional **programs** at the Nature Center on Friday, February 20th at 10:00 am and 7:00 pm.

Come at 6:30 pm, Thursday, February 19th for refreshments and to socialize. The program will begin at 7:00 pm, followed by the membership meeting at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center, 4601 Nature Center Way (off Business Highway 65).

Ruth Grant, program chair

FEBRUARY CALENDAR



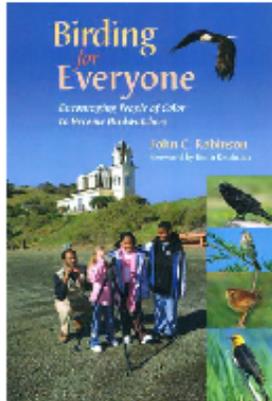
Missouri Department of Conservation's

Springfield Conservation Nature Center presents:

Diversity In The Outdoors

Connecting Youth To Nature

February 20 • Friday • 10 am–12 noon



Award-winning ornithologist, two-time #1 best-selling author, and wildlife biologist John C. Robinson has introduced hundreds of thousands of people all over the world to the joys of bird watching for over thirty-five years. In his latest

title, *Birding for Everyone: Encouraging People of Color to Become Birdwatchers*, he encourages the appreciation of nature through birding. John also explores the curious lack of a minority presence in the birding community and offers new solutions for changing the face of conservation through birding. In this interactive workshop, you can join John as he shares recent data collected from environmental educators across the globe that pinpoint the top 10 challenges and opportunities to connect our youth to nature and the outdoors. Special focus will be given to the concept of making our environmental message relevant to an increasingly diverse audience, including inner city youth. **There is no charge for this workshop for adults only, but registration is required by calling 417-888-4237 today.**



There are two more opportunities to hear John C. Robinson speak at the Nature Center

Missouri Birds—Identifying Birds Of Western Missouri

February 19 • Thursday • 7–8 pm

John will share his experiences as a beginning birder in northwest Missouri, discuss his current work that helps connect minority and inner city youth and young adults with nature, and review key techniques for identifying the birds of western Missouri by sight and by sound. This program is cosponsored by the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society. Call 417-888-4237 beginning January 15 to register for this program for ages 7–adult.

Birds—Wonders Of The Natural World

February 20 • Friday • 7–8:45 pm

John's unique combination of breath-taking photographs, fun biology lessons, personal stories, and humor has helped hundreds of thousands of birders worldwide to improve their bird identification skills. Be sure to bring your most burning bird questions so you can participate in the popular "Ask the Bird Man!" session that is part of this special presentation for ages 12–adult. Call 417-888-4237 beginning January 15 to register for this program for ages 10–adult.



These programs are cosponsored by: Missouri State University-Bull Shoals Field Station, City of Springfield-Department of Environmental Services, Springfield-Greene County Library, and Greater Ozarks Audubon Society.

The Springfield Conservation Nature Center is located in southeast Springfield just west of US-65 off the James River Freeway (US-60).

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William Swainson (1789-1855) was a British ornithologist and illustrator, who traveled to Brazil, but never reached the United States. Birds were named in his honor by Audubon: Swainson's Warbler, Bonaparte: Swainson's Hawk, and Nuttall: Swainson's Thrush.

Thomas Say (1767-1834) was an American entomologist and zoologist who accompanied Major Stephen Long on an expedition to the Rocky Mountains and the upper reaches of the Missouri in 1820-1821. The account of the expedition described eight birds new to science, including Say's Phoebe. However, he is better known for studying insects and mollusks.

Say died at 47, from typhoid fever, like Thomas Gambel. Clearly nineteenth century naturalists would have benefitted from better sanitation and cleaner water!

John James Audubon (Audubon's Oriole) and Meriwether Lewis (Lewis' Woodpecker) need no introduction to modern birders. Dr. Georg Wilhelm Steller (Steller's Jay) does, but I will save his story for next month's column.

I used sources from Wikipedia, the Wilson Ornithological Society, Towhee.net, the Daily Telegraph, and North American Birds Online for this article.