



GOAS *Scissortail*

GREATER OZARKS AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2016 VOLUME 39 ISSUE 2

FROM ANN'S AERIE

Ann Liles, GOAS Chapter President

Recently, a rash of rare birds have appeared in our corner of the state, and nearby locations! We were treated to an Anna's Hummingbird in Springfield from late November through mid-January. A Crested Caracara spent a couple of weeks in Newton County, while Long-tailed Ducks near Joplin, and a Rock Wren near Stockton Lake were exciting finds.

We all enjoy seeing rarities so close to home! Amid birders' thrills though, the act of viewing can bring up ethical and even safety issues. It's my experience that GOAS members bird ethically. We practice consideration for the wellbeing of the bird; we don't trespass on private property; we gain permission of the home or property owner before publishing their address as the location of a rare bird; and we follow the ABA guidelines on using electronic bird vocalizations on our fieldtrips.

So, why do I choose this topic this month? It provides some points for mindful conduct. There is a rare bird; a Brambling in Arkansas right now. It's far out of its range; the first state record and is causing considerable excitement. When the report appeared on eBird, I considered making the 8 hour round trip to see it. But upon checking the ABA listserv for the area, I found a letter posted by the President of the Arkansas Audubon Society. The bird is on private property without good access, and the

homeowner requested that no one enter the property. He is concerned about stressing the Brambling, because access is close to the feeders, causing the birds to repeatedly flush. The letter was posted the day after 40 to 50 people arrived to observe the bird, without any forewarning to the property owner. Those people weren't necessarily acting unethically. The homeowner's wishes appeared on the listserv, but were not published on eBird. My message is this: It is good public relations for birders to do some homework before heading out, and it might save you an 8 hour trip!

I also mentioned safety as a consideration when birding. Surprisingly, there are people in the world who have never encountered our subspecies – The Birder. Most folks are just curious. However, our use of binoculars, scopes, and cameras could appear threatening. To illustrate, one of our least threatening members was recently approached and verbally abused for "snooping." In hindsight, the man confronting her may have been unstable, based upon what he said to her. So when you are out, be aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Stay safe while enjoying those amazing birds.

Great Backyard Bird Count
February 12-15, 2016
Join GOAS, February 13, 9-11 a.m. at the Nature Center. We'll count birds at the feeders and submit an eBird list online. Learn more about [GBBC](#) and submit lists for one or all your favorite hotspots over the 4 day period!

FEBRUARY CALENDAR
GOAS BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9th
7:00 p.m. Environmental Resource Center
GOAS MEMBERSHIP MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18th
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
- Please enroll me as a member of NAS and Greater Ozarks Audubon.....\$20
- Introductory 2 year Membership.....\$35
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To join, make your check payable to National Audubon Society and mail with this form to:

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225 Varick Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10014
Attention: Chance Mueleck

Please send renewals to National Audubon. Follow instructions provided with notice to renew your membership, or **renew** through our web page.

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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Images from MSU's *Study Away* class in Brazil. Clockwise from top left: Class members in the jungle; transportation by Water Buffalo; a Wood Stork flies over the group; a giant rodent, the Capybara, foraging; Cacao pod and fruit.



FEBRUARY CALENDAR

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM...

Many folks including birders escape winter by traveling to the Central and South American tropics. Some enroll in *Study Away* classes, to spend an enriching, short semester outside the US. All return transformed in some way through their experiences viewing novel and exotic wildlife, sampling new foods, and interaction with people whose culture differs from ours.

February's program features Janice Greene and Jill Hays, who will present a look at a Missouri State University *Study Away* class to the Amazon in the presentation, **Brazil – Connections to North America**. They will discuss broad connections and show lots of pictures of places, scenery, and birds. Janice is a Professor of Biology at Missouri State University and Director of the Bull Shoals Field Station. She also serves on the GOAS Board as Vice-President. Jill is a professional, certified massage therapist, a Chapter Board member, a Master Naturalist and is drawn to birds of all kinds but especially Neotropical migrants and birds of the tropics.

Come at 6:30 pm, Thursday, February 18th 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