



GOAS *Scissortail*

GREATER OZARKS AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER MAY 2015 VOLUME 38 ISSUE 5

MAY CALENDAR
GOAS BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 12th
7:00 p.m. Environmental Resource Center
GOAS MEMBERSHIP MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 21st
7:00 p.m. Program
Springfield Conservation Nature Center

C5ZN040Z
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
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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.

DR. RUTH REPORTS

Ruth Grant, GOAS Chapter President

Warbler Migration: *The Greatest Show in (April and) May*

For those of you who heard Ted Floyd's presentation on Friday April 17 at the Nature Center, you already know that he considers the eastern North America spring warbler migration as 'the greatest show on earth'. And we're in the midst of that wonderful show right now! Of course Missouri is west of the Mississippi River, but for birders, Roger Tory Peterson defined east as anything east of 100 degrees west longitude. In Springfield we sit at 93.3 degrees west, meaning west of the zero degree meridian through Greenwich England.

We also learned from Dr. Floyd that we have one fewer warbler to search for this spring. No, it's not due to extinction; it's a reclassification. The Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) has been determined to be a close relative of blackbirds not warblers, but not close enough to be a member of the Icteriidae. Instead, a new family the Icterididae has been created for the Chat. However, that new classification hasn't made it onto the Cornell bird lab site yet. The most recent AOU checklist still lists the Chat as a member of the Parulidae, but an asterisk alerts the careful reader that the bird has probably been misclassified phylogenetically.

Dr. Floyd also discussed interbreeding between Golden-winged (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) and Blue-winged Warblers (*Vermivora cyanoptera*). Apparently not



Charley Burwick, Debbie Martin, and Ted Floyd @ RRSP

only do the eponymous hybrids of Lawrence's and Brewster's exist but also various backcrosses as well. As a result there is little correlation between the phenotype (appearance) and genotype of a member of this warbler complex. Does that mean we can count one warbler as two species? Unfortunately for the inveterate listers, no.

Those of us on a wonderful field trip to Roaring River April 18 heard many Worm-eating Warblers (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) singing and learned from our own Marge Williams about their unique feeding behavior. They turn up leaves on the forest floor and eat the insects, spiders and caterpillars (not earthworms) found beneath.

And of course most of us know that neither Connecticut (*Oporornis agilis*) nor Tennessee Warblers (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) breed or winter in Connecticut or Tennessee.

Regardless of the intricacies of genetic studies and scientific classification and subclassification, or the peculiarities of naming conventions, we birders (in contradistinction to ornithologists) can simply search for these winged beauties and enjoy the results of our springtime treasure hunt. *Good birding to you!*



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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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Annual Picnic and Big Day Compilation Pot Luck Sunday, May 31, 4:00 pm

- Nathaniel Greene Park Pavilion at the Botanical Center
- Bring a dish to share. Table service & drinks will be provided
- Bring your Big Day bird lists for compilation



**Annual Summer Planning Meeting Saturday,
 June 20 at 9:00 am, Sunshine Valley Farm Restaurant**
 Everyone is invited to participate in this annual opportunity
 to brainstorm, catch up with friends, and enjoy a
 summer solstice morning out on the porch.



White-eyed Vireo: Marvin De Jong, 2015

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM...

Our May program features our chapter's own rocket scientist, Marvin De Jong, nature photographer, and jack-of-all-trades/McGyver volunteer at a variety of National parks, sanctuaries, and research stations.

He'll talk about birding and volunteering in Southeast Arizona, where he and his wife, Claudia, just returned from their third stint.

Join us to be entertained with Marvin's unique perspective of life as a volunteer, and awed with his stunning photography. Birds and wildlife images from SE Arizona and the Southwestern Research Station will be featured, and with time permitting, he will show a few photos from their recent experiences volunteering at Rowe Sanctuary in Nebraska.

Come at 6:30 pm, Thursday, May 21st 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

MAY CALENDAR