

# **KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting**



**Sedgwick County Zoo/Great Plains Nature Center  
Wichita, Kansas**

**4 - 6 October 2019**

## **Schedule at a glance**

### **Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 a.m. - County listing trips. These will depart from Sedgwick County Zoo parking lot, 5555 W. Zoo Blvd, Wichita. This is something new that we are trying this year. Please contact Pete Janzen (pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net) 316-519-1970, to let us know if you plan to participate on Friday and which counties within a 75 mile radius of Wichita are of interest to you. These trips will likely visit locations farther afield than the Sunday half-day trips.

5:30-7:30 p.m. - Social at the Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 E. 29th St. North, Wichita.

### **Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>** *(see detailed schedule on following page)*

All Saturday events will be in the Cargill Learning Center at the Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 W. Zoo Boulevard, Wichita, KS.

8:00 a.m. - Registration in the lobby of the Cargill Learning Center, Sedgwick County Zoo.

9:00 a.m. - Welcome and morning paper session in the auditorium.

11:30 a.m. - KOS Business Meeting

11:45 a.m. – Lunch on your own. Many dining options are available near the zoo.

KOS Board Meeting: Location will be announced.

1:30 – 2:30 p.m. – Birdwatchers Hour. An opportunity for you to show your bird photos from the past year. Please bring your photos on a flash drive.

2:30 - 4:30 p.m. – Afternoon paper session.

4:30 p.m. – KOS Business Meeting

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. – Banquet at the North Boardroom, Cargill Learning Center.

7:30-9:30 pm. Awards and speaker. The banquet speaker is Ted Floyd, editor of Birding and Managing editor of North American Birds magazines, both published by the American Birding Association.

### **Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 a.m. – Half day field trips will include areas around Wichita and surrounding areas. Meet at the Sedgwick County Zoo parking lot.

Noon – Compilation at the new picnic pavilion next to the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot. The compilation will include all birds seen in Sedgwick and surrounding counties between 7 am on Oct. 4 and noon on Oct. 6

### **Upcoming Meetings**

May 1 – 3, 2020 KOS Spring Meeting, Concordia, Kansas

October 2 – 4, 2020, KOS Annual Meeting, Benedictine College, Atchison, Kansas

## Detailed Schedule for Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>

- 8:00 a.m. Registration - Cargill Learning Center, Sedgwick County Zoo
- 9:00 Welcome and Announcements  
Cheryl Miller, President Kansas Ornithological Society  
Pete Janzen, Local Committee Chair
- (Presenting author denoted by \* following their name.)
- 9:15 **Does cattle grazing affect bird densities in CRP grasslands?** *Benjamin S. Wilson<sup>1</sup>\**, *William E. Jensen<sup>1</sup>*, *Gregory R. Houseman<sup>2</sup>*, *Mary Liz Jameson<sup>2</sup>*, and *Molly M. Reichenborn<sup>2</sup>* <sup>1</sup>*Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University,* <sup>2</sup>*Department of Biological Sciences, Wichita State University*
- 9:30 **The Development of a Flyway-scale Shorebird Conservation Initiative for the Midcontinental Americas.** *Robert L. Penner II\**, *The Nature Conservancy*
- 9:45 **Shelterbelt Characteristics that Influence Bird Species Richness.** *Katya Frank\** and *Rob Channell*, *Fort Hays State University Department of Biological Sciences*
- 10:00 **Inspiring students to become citizen scientists and community conservationists through the eBird Project: A course-based undergraduate research experience (CURE).** *Karin R. Gastreich\**, *Department of Biology, Avila University*
- 10:15 Break
- 10:30 **An updated status report on the Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*) in Western Kansas.** *Erica L Clark\**, *Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas,* *Medhavi Ambardar*, *Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas,* *William J Stark*, *Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas*
- 10:45 **The quest to document the avifauna of the tropical lowland rainforests of West Africa: A Liberian Experience.** *Benedictus Freeman<sup>1</sup>\**, *Luis Antonio Sánchez González<sup>2</sup>*, *Marco Ortiz<sup>2</sup>*, *Mark Robbins<sup>1</sup>*, and *A. Townsend Peterson<sup>1</sup>*, <sup>1</sup>*Biodiversity Institute, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045 USA,* <sup>2</sup>*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México City, México*
- 11:00 **Responses of House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*) to a novel object and influences on fitness-related traits.** *Medhavi Ambardar\**, *Leslie A. Watson*, *Chloe M. Musgrove*, *Annie D. Hinds*, *Department of Biological Sciences, Fort Hays State University*

- 11:15      **Nestling condition of a grassland bird not associated with food availability in restored grasslands.** *Heather M. Kraus<sup>1\*</sup>, William E. Jensen<sup>1</sup>, Mary-Liz Jameson<sup>2</sup>, W. Alice Boyle<sup>3</sup>, Greg R. Houseman<sup>2</sup>, and Molly M. Reichenborn<sup>2</sup>, <sup>1</sup>Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University, <sup>2</sup>Department of Biological Sciences, Wichita State University, <sup>3</sup>Division of Biology, Kansas State University.*
- 11:30      KOS Business Meeting
- 11:45 – 1:30 p.m.      Lunch on your own. Many dining options are available near the zoo.  
KOS Board Meeting: Location will be announced.
- 1:30 p.m.      Birdwatchers Hour. An opportunity for you to show your bird photos from the past year. Please bring your photos on a flash drive.
- 2:30      **The Effects of Vegetation Characteristics on the Nesting Success and Breeding Behavior of a Desert-Specialist, the Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*).** *Miriam Reynaldo\*, Division of Biology, Kansas State University, John Mark Simmons, University of Georgia Odum School of Ecology*
- 2:45      **Mate quality in male American Kestrels: early results from a nest box-breeding population in eastern Kansas.** *Cordy L. Wesonig\* and Scott A. Kimball, Department of Biology and Chemistry, Baker University*
- 3:00      **Song Comparison of Geographically Isolated *Zosterops rendovae* White-eyes.** *Isaac Rush<sup>1\*</sup>, Reuben Tako<sup>2</sup>, Edna Toriah<sup>2</sup>, Lucas Dicecco<sup>1</sup>, Luke Klicka<sup>1</sup>, Rob Moyle<sup>1</sup>, <sup>1</sup>Biodiversity Institute -Ornithology Division, University of Kansas, <sup>2</sup>Solomon Islands National University*
- 3:15      **The effect of distance to edge on songbird nest predation in temperate deciduous forests of eastern Kansas.** *Kasey B. Oehlert\* and Scott A. Kimball, Department of Biology and Chemistry, Baker University*
- 3:30      Break
- 3:45      **Rapid Diversification of the *Todiramphus* Kingfishers.** *Devon A. DeRaad\*, Robert G. Moyle. Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, University of Kansas*
- 4:00      **Niche overlap in the Smoky Hills, Kansas: temporal and spatial relationships of Say's (*Sayornis saya*) and Eastern (*S. phoebe*) Phoebe.** *John Schukman, Leavenworth, KS*

4:15 **Birding for turtles: an opportunity to make significant contributions to herpetology (when the birding gets slow in the afternoon).** *Alexis F. L. A. Powell\**, *Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University*; and *Kylee Moon Sharp, Science Department, De Soto High School*

4:30 KOS Business Meeting

6:30 Banquet, Awards & Speaker - Banquet at the North Boardroom, Cargill Learning Center.

Banquet Speaker - The banquet speaker is Ted Floyd, editor of *Birding* and Managing editor of *North American Birds* magazines, both published by the American Birding Association.

## Abstracts of Presented Papers

**Does cattle grazing affect bird densities in CRP grasslands?** *Benjamin S. Wilson<sup>1\*</sup>, William E. Jensen<sup>1</sup>, Gregory R. Houseman<sup>2</sup>, Mary Liz Jameson<sup>2</sup>, and Molly M. Reichenborn<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University, 1 Kellogg Cir, Emporia, KS 66801, <sup>2</sup>Department of Biological Sciences, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount St, Wichita, KS 67260.

Grassland bird populations have declined across North America, presumably due to the conversion of contiguous grassland to cropland. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has restored grassland habitat and had demonstrable effects in benefitting grassland bird populations. However, cattle grazing as a management option in CRP is currently restricted, despite the important role that large herbivores play in grassland ecosystems. Conservative grazing may increase spatial heterogeneity and plant diversity, which might attract higher densities of some grassland bird species. Our objective was to determine how experimental cattle grazing affects species-specific densities of grassland birds on CRP grasslands. We modeled densities of five songbird species from distance sampling along line transects in 108 CRP fields across the longitudinal extent of Kansas during the 2017-2019 breeding seasons. Half of the 108 fields were grazed by cattle during the growing seasons of 2017 and 2018 and rested from grazing in 2019. We ran separate model sets for mesic eastern versus arid western Kansas for each species. Although densities varied for some species between CRP planting types (CP2 versus CP25), grazing had no substantial effects on densities of grassland songbird species included in our study. This suggests that conservative stocking of cattle as a mid-contract management option might not detrimentally affect bird densities in Kansas CRP grasslands.

**The Development of a Flyway-scale Shorebird Conservation Initiative for the Midcontinental Americas.** *Robert L. Penner II (\*) The Nature Conservancy.*

The midcontinent regions of North and South America provide critical breeding, migration stopover and nonbreeding habitat for numerous resident and migratory shorebirds. Fifty-five percent of 45 shorebird populations using the midcontinent region of Canada and the United States demonstrate long-term declines, whereas only 9% show increases. Despite the clear conservation needs of a suite of shorebird species using habitats in the midcontinent regions of North and South America, a comprehensive, strategic framework for shorebird conservation is lacking. As part of an overall conservation initiative, the development of a strategic framework will provide an integrated approach for guiding management and conservation actions throughout the Midcontinental Americas Flyway, which will complement conservation initiatives developed in the Atlantic and Pacific Americas Flyways and complete a comprehensive approach to shorebird conservation in the Americas. The location of Kansas in the Central Flyway and because we have two Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Sites and one Landscape of Hemispheric Importance, we are in a unique position to play a major role in shorebird conservation on an international scale. In this presentation I will discuss the development of the fly-way scale shorebird conservation initiative along with the potential for a Flint Hills Shorebird Initiative and how members of KOS may be of assistance.

**Shelterbelt Characteristics that Influence Bird Species Richness.** *Katya Frank\* and Rob Channell, Fort Hays State University Department of Biological Sciences.*

On the Great Plains, shelterbelts consist of one or more rows of trees and are used to protect farmsteads from the elements. Shelterbelts are also used by birds for migration, shelter, food resources, and nesting. I hypothesized that shelterbelt characteristics would influence bird species richness. I conducted point-count surveys to record species at 25 shelterbelts in Rooks and Russell counties in Kansas. I conducted my study between April and July 2018. I measured shelterbelt characteristics including tree type, diameter at breast-height, percent canopy cover, percent foliage cover, plant growth form, litter depth, understory visual obstruction, surrounding habitat, distance to road, distance to water, distance to nearest group of trees, shelterbelt area, and shelterbelt perimeter. I recorded 54 species occurring at shelterbelts. The shelterbelt with the highest species richness (n=25) and lowest species richness (n=6) were located near Webster reservoir. The relationship between species richness and shelterbelt characteristics were calculated using multiple regression. Size of the shelterbelt, visual obstruction, median proportion of forbs, and shrubs had significant relationships with species richness. This study could be used to help landowners and range managers design shelterbelts to attract particular species of birds to meet management objectives.

**Inspiring students to become citizen scientists and community conservationists through the eBird Project: A course-based undergraduate research experience (CURE).** *Karin R. Gastreich, Department of Biology, Avila University.*

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird project (<http://ebird.org>) provides an array of technology tools and online resources that facilitate biodiversity education through birding. Using these tools, I have designed a course-based undergraduate research experience (CURE) where students consider factors that affect avian diversity across different habitats in the urban landscape of the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area. Students collaborate with each other in the design of a field-based research project. They then implement their field investigation using tools such as eBird and Merlin Bird ID. The module has been integrated into an upper-level conservation biology course and a course on experimental design. I give an overview of the eBird CURE module, including approaches to teaching students how to use eBird and Merlin Bird ID, activities for experimental design and data analysis, and options for final reports. I also discuss challenges encountered during module implementation and adaptations to meet these challenges. Many students I work with do not have birding experience before participating in my courses. According to course assessments and student evaluations, the eBird CURE module successfully increased awareness of biodiversity concepts while inspiring students to participate in citizen science, including the eBird Project, beyond the course. Birds are excellent model organisms for connecting students to their home environment and inspiring interest in conservation at multiple scales. The eBird CURE module can also serve as a model for similar biodiversity education initiatives based on other citizen science platforms.

**An updated status report on the Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*) in Western Kansas.**

Erica L Clark\*, Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas, Medhavi Ambardar, Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas, William J Stark, Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas.

The Ferruginous Hawk is the largest Buteo species occurring in Kansas. They occur in grasslands, nesting along bluffs, buttes, rock outcrops and some isolated trees. In Kansas, the Ferruginous Hawk is listed as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need, Tier II. A previous study on Ferruginous Hawk nesting in Kansas during the years of 1979 to 1987, with sporadic nest visits from the 1990s to 2000, revealed that the most productive nest sites were in infrequently visited areas. These sites were also inaccessible to predators, placed on rocky ledges and the surrounding landscape composed of over 50% rangeland. We revisited 68 of the 120 historic nest sites in the summer of 2019. We contacted landowners with a historic nest site on their property to ask for access. When a nest was found we flew a drone above the nest to determine if it was active or inactive. During flight, photographs were captured of the nest contents, including eggs/chicks, and videos were obtained of surrounding habitat for later analysis and site comparison. Of the 68 sites 9 (or 13%) were active and averaged two chicks each. These sites were all placed on rocky ledges or columns. The findings of this study will be used by KDWPT to determine the best conservation practices for the persistence of the Ferruginous Hawk, with landowners playing a key role via their rangeland management practices.

**The quest to document the avifauna of the tropical lowland rainforests of West Africa: A Liberian Experience.** *Benedictus Freeman<sup>1\*</sup>, Luis Antonio Sánchez González<sup>2</sup>, Marco Ortiz<sup>2</sup>, Mark Robbins<sup>1</sup>, and A. Townsend Peterson<sup>1</sup>, <sup>1</sup>Biodiversity Institute, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045 USA, <sup>2</sup>Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México City, México.*

Biodiversity is a crucial element of the natural heritage and natural resources of the Earth, and yet remains poorly inventoried and under-described in many parts of the world. This knowledge gap is particularly acute in tropical regions, where biodiversity is concentrated. The challenges involved in filling this gap are many, including basic inventory, description, analysis, and interpretation. Here, we present field notes from our recent expedition to Liberia (May-July 2019) in a quest to document and assemble comprehensive series of modern tissue samples of birds from sites across Liberia. We anticipate that our work will generate data that will be used to develop phylogeographic studies of birds that occur in Liberia to re-examine species limits in key sets of taxa, to provide a new view of species diversity and endemism in the country and in far West Africa more generally.

**Responses of House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*) to a novel object and influences on fitness-related traits.** *Medhavi Ambaradar (\*), Leslie A. Watson, Chloe M. Musgrove, Annie D. Hinds, Department of Biological Sciences, Fort Hays State University.*

Individual birds vary in their reactions to their local environment and these reactions can have strong fitness consequences. One way in which birds react to their environment is by being bold. Bold individuals may gain a fitness advantage as they are more likely to explore new territories, seek mates, and defend offspring against predators. Alternatively, boldness may incur costs as bold individuals may engage in more risky behaviors. Boldness occurs along a gradient that varies from very bold individuals to shy (non-bold) individuals. A common way to test boldness is by measuring an individual's response to a novel object in their local environment. Using House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*), we tested the hypothesis that adult boldness increase fitness. We used the response of adult wrens to a novel object (a small, yellow rubber duck) as a proxy



for boldness. When nestlings were between 7 and 9 days old, we conducted a novel object trial. During the trial, we placed the rubber duck on top of the nest box. We then recorded the latency to land on the nest box and the latency to enter the nest box for both males and females over a total trial period of 30 minutes. We compared male and female responses to the novel object with two measures of reproductive success: nestling mass at fledging, and the number of offspring fledged. Our findings will be discussed in relation to evolutionary consequences of bold behavior.

**Nestling condition of a grassland bird not associated with food availability in restored grasslands.** Heather M. Kraus<sup>1\*</sup>, William E. Jensen<sup>1</sup>, Mary-Liz Jameson<sup>2</sup>, W. Alice Boyle<sup>3</sup>, Greg R. Houseman<sup>2</sup>, and Molly M. Reichenborn<sup>2</sup>, <sup>1</sup>Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University, 1 Kellogg Circle, Emporia KS 66801, <sup>2</sup>Department of Biological Sciences, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount St., Wichita KS 67260, <sup>3</sup>Division of Biology, Kansas State University, 116 Ackert Hall, Manhattan KS 66506

Grassland bird populations have experienced steep declines, necessitating understanding of factors affecting their reproductive success, which might include food availability. Grasslands are highly variable environments and such variation affects the diversity and abundance of arthropods, which constitute the diet for most nestling grassland birds. Higher arthropod abundance might allow greater parental provisioning of nestlings and, consequently, improved nestling condition and survival. However, few studies have tested the effects of variable food availability on nestling condition in grassland birds. We examined Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) nestling condition in relation to abundance of arthropod prey across restored grassland sites that varied in management history (e.g., seed mixes, grazing regime) in Kansas. Despite much variation among fields in orthopteran (0.007 – 3.405 g) and total arthropod (0.091 – 3.601 g) biomass, this variation was unrelated to management history and no measure of nestling condition showed clear relationships with field-level variation in either biomass measure. Instead, brood size explained some variation in nestling condition with nestlings in larger broods generally having lower mass than those in smaller broods ( $\beta = -0.60$ , 95% CI: -0.85, -0.35 for mass-tarsus residuals). Arthropod biomass was not a strong predictor of nestling condition, perhaps because parents can compensate for food limitation in their nesting territories. Our results suggest that metrics of Dickcissel nestling condition known to affect post-fledging survival may not be affected by spatial variation in food availability, at least in some years. Our work is consistent with classic ideas regarding lack of food limitation to birds breeding in grasslands.

**The Effects of Vegetation Characteristics on the Nesting Success and Breeding Behavior of a Desert-Specialist, the Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*).** Miriam Reynaldo, Division of Biology, Kansas State University, John Mark Simmons, University of Georgia Odum School of Ecology.

Breeding season, generally occurring mid-spring to late-summer, is a crucial time of year for songbirds and well documented across many species. However, for the Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) there is a gap in knowledge of this species' breeding characteristics. In a past breeding bird survey, Scott's Orioles have shown a strong tie with tall, tree-like yuccas such *Yucca torreyi* and *Yucca elata*, exclusively nesting in these species. However, in our study area

on Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge (Sevilleta NWR), the two common species, *Yucca baccata* and *Yucca glauca*, are too small to provide a nesting location for orioles thus resulting in the sole use of *Juniperus monosperma*. To better understand nest tree selection habits of Scott's Orioles, we located and monitored nests of 20 breeding pairs and took various vegetations measurements of nest trees and surrounding area. Furthermore, using substantial historical data collected from Sevilleta NWR, we compared these characteristics to those of resident Gray Vireos (*Vireo vicinior*), as well as, random juniper data points. It was concluded that Scott's Orioles select for a specific range of nest tree density (concealment), tree height, and tree width when selecting a nesting site. Furthermore, non-statistically significant trends were detected for several nest tree characteristics such as junipers per hectare around nest tree, juniper width, and nest height from ground in relation to nesting success. Additionally, we documented many aspects of the oriole's natural history including female song, double brooding, and possible Brown-headed Cowbirds brood parasitism. We hope to provide a baseline for future research regarding nesting Scott's Orioles in New Mexico as well as other portions of their range.

**Mate quality in male American Kestrels: early results from a nest box-breeding population in eastern Kansas.** *Cordy L. Wesonig\* and Scott A. Kimball, Department of Biology and Chemistry, Baker University.*

In the sexually dichromatic American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), the female can drive sexual selection by pairing with males with preferred phenotypes. Therefore, characterizing male phenotypes in mated pairs may suggest which male traits might indicate qualities important for successfully rearing offspring. As is typical for many groups of birds, female Kestrels are more cryptic in their coloration while males are more conspicuous. Specifically, male tail coloration may advertise mate quality due the conspicuous rufous coloration and high contrast combination of a sub-terminal black band and terminal white band. Previous research has suggested that black band width is correlated with paternal care. In this study, we investigated whether the black sub-terminal tail band width was correlated with other indicators of mate quality, such as feather growth bar width, scaled mass index, and prey delivery rates. We collected data on eight pairs of American Kestrels over the course of two breeding seasons in eastern Kansas. Preliminary results suggest no relationship between the black sub-terminal tail band width and these other variables, but continuing research may still provide insights into the mechanics of mate selection though sexual dichromatism in American Kestrels.

**Song Comparison of Geographically Isolated *Zosterops rendovae* White-eyes.** *Isaac Rush<sup>1\*</sup>, Reuben Tako<sup>2</sup>, Edna Toriah<sup>2</sup>, Lucas Dicecco<sup>1</sup>, Luke Klicka<sup>1</sup>, Rob Moyle<sup>1</sup>, <sup>1</sup>Biodiversity Institute - Ornithology Division, University of Kansas, <sup>2</sup>Solomon Islands National University.*

The family Zosteropidae is a relatively young and species rich clade with one of the highest diversification rates estimated for a vertebrate lineage. The family has rapidly diversified across a broad geographic area including the Old-World Tropics and temperate Asia but some of the most striking patterns of diversification have occurred on island archipelagos. In particular, are the white eye populations of Western Province within the Solomon Island archipelago. Despite short distances and shallow channels separating many of the Western Province islands a total of 7 white-eye taxa have been described. In fact, the species *Zosterops rendovae* and *Zosterops teteparius* are the only known species pair to have differentiated between the islands of Rendova

and Tetepari. The two species are easily identified in the field by their belly plumage. In 1998, Jared Diamond described the song of *Z. teteparius* as faster than all other white-eyes in Western Province and that it was strikingly different from the songs of *Z. rendovae*. However, Diamond's analysis was based on his vast experience with bird song and did not include a quantitative approach. Therefore, after collecting recordings for both *Z. rendovae* and *Z. teteparius* this past summer, we evaluate the divergence of bird song for a unique species pair between Rendova and Tetepari.

**The effect of distance to edge on songbird nest predation in temperate deciduous forests of eastern Kansas.** *Kasey B. Oehlert\* and Scott A. Kimball, Department of Biology and Chemistry, Baker University.*

Nest predation due to fragmentation of forests has led to population declines in over 56% of all bird species. Nearly 80% of all bird nest failures are caused by nest predation along the forest edge. In this study, we investigated the effect of distance to the forest edge on nest predation. We conducted a 25-day experiment in which we recorded nest predation at artificial nests placed 0m, 15m, and 30m from the forest edge at the Baldwin Woods Forest Preserve in Baldwin City, Kansas. The nests located along the forest edge were depredated earlier in the experiment than the nests further in the forest. There was no difference in predation between nests placed at 15m and 30m. These results suggest that increased fragmentation could lead to accelerated songbird population declines due to predation, a growing concern as forest fragmentation continues to increase with urbanization, road construction, and other human activity.

**Rapid Diversification of the *Todiramphus* Kingfishers.** *Devon A. DeRaad\*, Robert G. Moyle. Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, University of Kansas.*

The *Todiramphus* Kingfishers, which are distributed throughout Melanesia, represent one of the most rapid avian radiations studied to date. The canonical model of avian speciation posits that a single panmictic population becomes geographically and genetically isolated, evolving isolating mechanisms over millions of years, which prevent lineage collapse upon secondary contact. *Todiramphus* provides a challenge to this framework, with previous molecular work showing over a dozen currently recognized species evolving within the past 500-750K years, maintaining complex patterns of secondary sympatry. Here, we focus on a seven species ingroup within *Todiramphus*, which contains multiple independent evolutions of secondary sympatry between recently diverged sister taxa. We densely resampled these seven species using reduced-representation genomic sequencing, generating 335,901 genome-wide loci across 57 samples. From these loci, we called 124,685 Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms, which we used to infer phylogeny and investigate population structure within each of these groups. We find a surprising lack of genome-wide gene-flow between sympatric, recently diverged groups, implying the rapid evolution of genetic isolating mechanisms across *Todiramphus*.

**Niche overlap in the Smoky Hills, Kansas: temporal and spatial relationships of Say's (*Sayornis saya*) and Eastern (*S. phoebe*) Phoebe.** *John Schukman, 14207 Robin Road, Leavenworth, KS 66048*

The Great Plains of central North America provide opportunities for pairs of closely related species that replace each other from east to west to approach spatially and form contact zones or hybrid zones. The Say's (*Sayornis saya*) and Eastern (*S. phoebe*) Phoebe overlap across much of the central and northern Great Plains where their breeding ranges reach their respective eastern and western range limits. Previous study showed that Say's Phoebes nested in open country with sparse or no surrounding woodland, whereas Eastern Phoebe nests were primarily along woodland streams but also at nine sites in more open country where Say's Phoebes had nested, the last report in the spring of 2019. Modeling of bioclimatic variables in the contact zone showed the niche space of the Eastern Phoebe embedded more into that of Say's Phoebe than the converse. Plans are to assess nest site occupancy in 2020 and beyond, and in light of climate change how the balance between the earlier nesting Eastern Phoebe and the xeric-adapted Say's Phoebe might shift in coming decades. A request that phoebe observations in Ellis County, Kansas be posted as a site-specific single entry in eBird for future use.

**Birding for turtles: an opportunity to make significant contributions to herpetology (when the birding gets slow in the afternoon).** *Alexis F. L. A. Powell\**, *Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University; and Kylee Moon Sharp, Science Department, De Soto High School.*

Herpetologists, both amateur and professional, have done an outstanding job mapping occurrences of terrestrial and wetlands-dwelling amphibians and reptiles. By contrast, distributions of strictly riverine species are poorly known. Based upon our experience studying map turtles (*Graptemys* spp.) in rivers of eastern Kansas over the past three years, we contend that birders, not herpetologists, are best prepared to discover and document these species. We found that visual survey techniques borrowed from birding were far more effective than methods typically employed by herpetologists, such as hand capture and live-trapping. For example, the Northern Map Turtle (*G. geographica*), a threatened species in Kansas, was known in 1911–1952 from 9 specimens collected at 8 locations, went unrecorded 1953–1989, was rediscovered in 1990–1991 through extensive trapping that yielded 10 individuals at 7 locations, went unrecorded 1992–2016 excepting a few unvouchered sightings, and was found again in 2017–2019 with another laborious trapping survey that yielded 8 individuals at 8 locations. In fall 2018, we decided to try using birding methods to detect river turtles while they were basking or swimming. Thus far, via a comparatively modest and sporadic effort, we have found 62 Northern Map Turtles at 35 locations (including several new county records) and have logged many important records of other species, all documented with photographs for museum archives. Birders are uniquely well-prepared to contribute to this endeavor because they already have well-honed visual search skills, own the necessary equipment (binoculars, spotting scope), and may be acquainted with digiscoping.

## **Nominating Committee Report: Slate of Candidates**

**President** – Cheryl Miller  
**Vice President** – Jenn Rader  
**Secretary** – Chuck Otte  
**Treasurer** – Max Thompson  
**Membership Development Coordinator** – Jeff Calhoun  
**Board Member** – Kylee Sharp  
**Board Member** – Kurt Meier  
**Business Manager** – Malcolm Gold  
**Editor, *Bulletin*** - Eugene Young  
**Editor, *Horned Lark*** – Chuck Otte

The Board Member positions of Dave Rintoul and Nick Varvel do not expire. Nic Allen has requested to step down from the board so Matt Gearheart will return to the board as Past-President. These positions are automatic and do not require a vote.

*The 2019 Nominating Committee was comprised of Malcolm Gold and Dave Rintoul.*

We would like to thank Pete Janzen and all of the Wichita local committee for all of their hard work in making this such a successful meeting!