

# Audubon

Vol. 64 No. 6

March 2025

## March Meeting



Our presentation will be “Chasing America’s Raptors,” by Scott Harris - birder, photographer, and author. Scott Harris spent 17 months chasing 53 raptors across 34 states—his version of a Raptor Big Year. *RaptorQuest* is his book about his adventures, misadventures, successes and failures. From -36 degree days, to ones over 100 degrees, to just getting on the bird just in time, to the frustrations of missing one by minutes. It’s about the birds—of course—but it’s also about the people he met, the things he learned and why he’s already working on his next adventure.

Scott Harris and his wife Randi retired to South Carolina in March of 2020-something. It was also when he first started birding – a hobby he never imagined himself participating in, but now can’t imagine living without.

They sold their long-time home and business, Mustang Marketing, a marketing/branding company they had owned for 35 years. While in California, Scott had a syndicated newspaper column and two weekly radio shows. He and his son Justin also hosted a Los Angeles Dodgers weekly live radio show. Scott sat on dozens of boards over the years, including Boys & Girls Club, United Way, The Sheriff’s Foundation, Pepperdine University, Moorpark College and California State University Northridge.

He has written almost fifty books in the past six years - though the one he’ll be discussing today is his first entrée into the world of birding and birds.

The presentation will be a Zoom presentation, which will be projected at the Great Plains Nature Center on Tuesday, March 18, 7 p.m. A recording of the program will be available on [YouTube](#) the next day.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*There is a schedule of events that you can [print or download](#). Information about all our activities is available on our [website](#).*

### **March 8, 8 a.m. Second Saturday bird walk in Chisholm Creek Park.**

No birding experience needed. Expect 1-2 miles of walking on paved paths for about 90 minutes. Meet in the parking lot at 8 a.m. Note that the December walk will coincide with the Wichita Christmas Bird Count *Questions? Tom Ewert, 316-670-3140, [trewert@yahoo.com](mailto:trewert@yahoo.com)*

### **March 12, WEDNESDAY, 7:30 p.m. Woodcocks in Chisholm Creek Park**

American Woodcock engage in a unique courtship display on early spring evenings. We’ll try to catch sight of them just as it gets dark. Note that this is WEDNESDAY to avoid the crowds of walkers in the park. Meet in the GPNC parking lot. *Leader: Bob Gress, 316-765-2046, [bobgress@cox.net](mailto:bobgress@cox.net)*

# Extended Field Trip to Puerto Rico

Twelve people traveled to Puerto Rico for this year's extended field trip. We were focused on Puerto Rican endemics, which means birds found nowhere else on earth. We arrived in San Juan, then spent the next five days circling the island.

We drove southeast to the Humacao wetlands which had freshwater, brackish and saltwater ponds. We got our first look at the Puerto Rican Tody. Then on the Pterocarpus Forest for our target species of Green-throated Carib and Antillean Crested Hummingbirds. At only 51 acres, this swamp forest was filled with buttressed trees, vines, and the constantly calling Coqui, a common Puerto Rican frog. We ended the day at Guayanilla on the southern coast, where we spent four nights.

We drove inland into the mountains to the Maricao State Forest, consisting of wet montane and cloud forest habitats. We found some of our target endemics including Puerto Rican Bullfinch, Puerto Rican Tanager and Elfin-woods Warbler. In the afternoon we went to La Parquet and searched the mangroves for Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds. We visited this area on several days and never did find more than a fleeting glimpse of the blackbirds. At Guanica on a shoreline boardwalk and trail we found Adelaide's Warbler and a pair of White-cheeked Pintails.

At Laguna Cartagena NWR we found the Loggerhead Kingbird, and that evening at Guanica State Forest there was a brief sighting of the Puerto Rican Owl, but only a few of us saw it.

For our last day we went to the northwestern part of the island. At an overlook near Isabella we saw White-tailed Tropicbirds. At Bosque Estatal de Cambalache we found the Puerto Rican Vireo.

We ended the trip finding 16 of the 18 endemic species.

Participants were Jackie and Andrew Augustine, Tom Ewert, Barbara Gobbert and Herb Parsons, Bob Gress, Kevin and Laura Groeneweg, Jim and Patty Marlett, Carolyn and Terry Schwab, Rod Wedel, and Dana Bob Zook.



Getting info from our guide, William Suarez, 2nd from the right, along with (l to r) Bob Gress, Jim Marlett, Rod Wedel (hidden), Carolyn Schwab, Tom Ewert, Dana Bob Zook and Herb Parsons.

## March 15-16, Loess Bluffs NWR Field Trip

Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge (formerly Squaw Creek NWR) is located in northwest Missouri near Mound City. It is an Internationally Important Bird Area (IBA.) During the fall and winter, as many as 4,000 Trumpeter Swans and 400 Bald Eagles have been spotted. Our field trip will be by auto on the 10-mile, one-way driving loop. Meet at the McDonald's in Mound City, MO (809 State St) at 1 p.m. on Saturday to enjoy the afternoon and evening flights of Snow Geese and waterfowl. For those who spend the night we will meet again on Sunday morning to tour the loop road again before departing for home. The nearest motel is the Super 8, 109 West 8th St, in Mound City.

Leader: Bob Gress, 316-765-2046, [bobgress@cox.net](mailto:bobgress@cox.net)

## CNC

Our selection committee is in place and the director position has been posted in several places, so we are waiting for applications.

The trails at CNC have remained open, but we have taken a break from opening the visitor's center since the weather has been so bad. In March we will resume opening the visitor's center Saturdays 9 - 5 and Sundays 1 - 5.

## Volunteer Thanks

We have had several hardworking volunteers who have been repairing, cleaning and organizing things at CNC over the last few months. A big thanks to Rex Herndon, Dwight Schoup, Bill Gress, and Kevin Groeneweg for all their work.





*Banaquit - not endemic, but we saw lots of them.*



*A sunset view from Guanica State Forest*



*A boardwalk in the Humacao Wetlands*



*Green-throated Carib, one of the endemic hummingbirds*



*Puerto Rican Tody*



*Puerto Rican Spindalis*



*Puerto Rican Oriole*





*One of our lunch stops*



*Pearly-eyed Thrasher*



*Green Iguanas* were introduced to Puerto Rico in the 1970s through the pet trade. They have no natural predators and now number in the millions.



*Punta Cucharas Natural Reserve*



*Puerto Rican Woodpecker*



*The boardwalk at Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge*