

Kentucky Ornithological Society

Annual Meeting, September 20-22, 2024

Lake Cumberland State Resort Park

Birders from all over the state came together to experience fall migration and enjoy camaraderie at the annual meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society (KOS) at Lake Cumberland State Resort Park, September 20 – 22.

There were two trips offered on Friday afternoon for people who arrived early. Nancy Braun and Donna Hundley led a trip around the Lure Lodge and park area. Jeremy Teague and Asher Higgins went to the Wolf Creek Dam.

Friday Evening Program

The Friday evening program was held at Lure Lodge. KOS President, Jeremy Teague welcomed attendees and went over the schedule. KOS Vice President, Donna Hundley introduced the Friday evening agenda and provided some basic information.

Steve Kistler gave his always-popular bird quiz to start the meeting.

Ethan Wells was the next speaker. He is a homeschooled senior who attended Camp Colorado in late June with a Kingsolver scholarship from the KOS. He went through his camp experience day by day with a presentation showing the different habitats and the organisms he photographed in each one. At camp, he made new friends and added 56 life birds to his list. The experience helped focus his interest in the natural world with an emphasis on communication.

The final speaker of the evening was Curtis Pelston, the naturalist at Lake Cumberland SRP. He gave a brief history of the park. The lake was formed with a dam built in 1950/1951 to prevent flooding problems; a large chunk of land was reserved for public use, eventually leading to the establishment of the park.

Donna introduced the field trip leaders for Saturday's outings.

8:00 AM

- Jeremy Teague – casual walk around the lodge area and in the park
- Ethan Wells – Kendall Recreation Area by the Wolf Creek Fish Hatchery
- Asher Higgins – Wolf Creek Dam area
- Win Ahrens – Parking lot near the cabins, first boat launch not at State Dock, several stops along the entrance road and end of Rowena Rd.

1:00 PM

- Steve Kistler – nature walk at the Kendall Recreation area – campground and meadow.
- Ethan Wells – Wolf Creek Dam area

Saturday Evening Program

Jeremy Teague welcomed everyone to the Saturday evening meeting, which included the KOS business meeting. He offered thanks for all the support KOS members have provided with memberships, donations, and with our fundraisers including t-shirt and hat sales, Kroger Community Rewards participation, and the raffle of two beautiful Frank Lyne carvings.

Next on the agenda was the tally of the birds seen so far this weekend (90). After that, the drawing was held for the carvings and Win Ahrens spoke about the importance of supporting the Kingsolver Fund, to help more young people attend ABA Birding Camps.

Steve Kistler gave the treasurer's report and membership report. Fundraisers were successful, with the Kroger Community Rewards bringing in \$575 last year and merch sales yielding \$1,500.

He summarized the purpose of the special funds (Anne Stamm Avian Education Fund, Burt Monroe Avian Research Fund, Gordon Wilson Publication Fund, and the Virginia and Wendell Kingsolver Scholarship Fund). He provided a list of recipients of KOS grant funds in 2024. See below *

General fund money is primarily used to pay for meetings and for publication/ mailing of *The Kentucky Warbler*. Any excess general fund money can be used for awarding grant requests.

In summary, KOS is financially solvent and our membership is stable at around 320 members.

Jeremy presented the slate of candidates for the KOS Board of Directors. See slate below** A motion was made by Pat Meyer to approve the slate. Cheryl Olson seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.

The keynote speaker for the meeting was Dr. David Pitts. He is a rural Tennessee native and professional ornithologist. He was a member of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Tennessee, where he taught and researched for 45 years. His research focused on Eastern Bluebirds, Carolina Chickadees, and recently, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

From 2011-2024, he found and studied over 300 RTHU nests near his home in Martin, TN. He showed the correlation of range with tree availability and provided tips on how to find hummingbird nests. RTHU will build nests on any tree – look at thin (1/4 to 1/2 inch) downward pointing branches about 3 feet from the end of the branch.

He suggested two great trees to have to encourage hummingbird nesting: Eastern Red Cedar and Virginia Pine. Both trees provide abundant protein foods (insects) and nesting materials (spider webs and lichens.) He recommended two herbaceous plants that are good for hummers – Jewelweed and Scarlet Bee Balm.

He learned from his research that hummingbirds can have up to 3 broods per year and sometimes the nesting attempts overlap – the female is still caring for chicks while starting another nest and laying eggs. The female does all the work in nesting attempts but generally outlives the male. With his work, Dr. Pitts made substantial contributions to the knowledge of RTHU nesting. Everyone enjoyed learning more about these awesome, feisty little birds.

Jeremy thanked our speaker and everyone who attended. He announced the Sunday morning field trips before adjourning the meeting:

- Roseanna Denton – Kendall Recreation Area, meet at the boat ramp
- Asher Higgins – will be at the Wolf Creek Dam at 7:00

The spring KOS meeting will be at Jenny Wiley State Resort Park on the 4th weekend in April.

* Special Fund Grants Awarded in 2024

- Monroe Fund - \$ 1,700 to Dr. Matt Carroll at Murray State U. for equipment to monitor migrating shorebirds
- Wilson Fund - \$ 850 for publication of an article on Barn Owl nesting habitat and species management, by Kate Slankard and James Barnard with KDFWR and Dr. Andrea Darracq at Murray State U.
- Kingsolver Fund - \$ 1,895 to send Ethan Wells to ABA summer camp
- Anne Stamm
 - \$1,000 to Kelly Barbour at Thomas More University for binoculars to be used in the field by students.
 - \$1,400 to Red Oaks Forest school for radio telemetry equipment, to be maintained by Dr. David Westneat at U.K.
 - \$750 to Logan County Public Library for binoculars and a bird bath for use by library patrons.
 - \$500 to the Bullitt County Cooperative Extension Service to help purchase optics for their youth birding programs
 - \$500 to the Berea Ornithology Club for the purchase of binoculars
 - \$1,000 to the Josephine Sculpture Park in Frankfort to help fund their Conservation and Outreach Programs for young people

**KOS Slate of Candidates - Fall 2024

Positions run from September 2024 through September 2025. Names in bold and italics are new in position.

President - Jeremy Teague, Calvert City

Vice President - David Bailey, Louisville

Corresponding Secretary - Carol Besse, Louisville

Treasurer - Steve Kistler, Munfordville

Recording Secretary - Janet Kistler, Munfordville

Councillors

2022 – 2025 – Nancy Braun, Lexington

2022 – 2025 – Donna Hundley, Madisonville

2022 – 2025 – Win Ahrens, Beckham Bird Club, Louisville

2023 – 2026 – Michael Patton, Midway

2023 – 2026 – Asher Higgins, Bethelridge

2024 – 2027 – Libby Megna, Barbourville

2024 – 2027 – Kyle Bixler, Wilmore

Previous President - James Wheat, Taylorsville