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Subject: July Paddle Trails Newsletter
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To: ann.b.owen@icloud.com



July 2026

Paddle Trails

The Ozark Society Pulaski Chapter Newsletter



ozarksociety.net

Upcoming Chapter Meeting

NO JULY MEETING

Pulaski Chapter Officers

Chair - Ann Owen

Vice Chair - Rick Owen

Treasurer - Charles Mullins

Outings Co-Chairs -
Tommie Kelly, Mary Heller

Membership & Newsletter Chair - Stacey Svendsen

Conservation Co-Chairs -
Alice Andrews, John Fletcher

Hospitality - Vicki Jett

Nominating - Mary Schlatterer, Janet Nye,
David Peterson

At-large Board Members
- Janet Nye, Alan Nye

A Word from Our Chair

Summer is in full swing, which for me means lots of yardwork and training for fall hiking trips! Hope you are filling your summer days with activities that give you renewal, respite and relaxation.

Just a reminder that our chapter doesn't meet in July, so we'll reconvene on August 4, when Joe Jacobs from *Arkansas Outside* will join us with an exciting update on the Southwest, Southeast, and Delta Heritage trails!

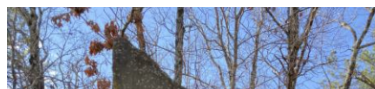
Several donations have come in since my 65th birthday fundraiser for the *Arkansas Times* environmental reporter position on May 30, so we've raised about \$6500 - many thanks to everyone that contributed! We also enjoyed toasting Phillip Powell in appreciation for his environmental reporting during his two-year tenure at the *Times*! We are looking forward to the writings of [Elizabeth Cline](#), their next Report for America journalist. See you on the trail!

Ann Owen, Chair



ARKANSAS TIMES

Conservation Report — David Peterson



Advancing the Flatside Wilderness Bill

Adding 2,215 acres of wilderness to the existing Flatside Wilderness is not easy but there has been some progress



Wilderness is not easy, but there has been some progress. French Hill obtained a unanimous voice vote in favor in the House, but its chances as a stand-alone bill in the Senate are small due to opposition to all wilderness by some western senators. Senator Boozman, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, is working on language to attach the Flatside bill to the current farm bill. As part of an omnibus bill, it might pass scrutiny, but the Senate is unpredictable. It never hurts to write nice emails or letters to Boozman's office. Brian, Tom McClure, and I actually got personal callbacks this week, which did show earnest interest.

Boozman's DC office number: (202) 224-4843

Climate Change, Human Health, and Prescribed Burns

An article in the June 13, 2026, Economist magazine titled "Lung Cancer, Predict and Prevent" includes the conclusion of studies by more than 80 scientists showing that "air pollution triggers the release of a signaling molecule interleukin-1 beta [which] when reaching lung cells that carry dormant cancer-causing mutations, activates these mutations. The cells proliferate and grow into a tumor."

Most of us don't smoke or intentionally inhale smoke from other sources, but it was pretty difficult to avoid the pall of smoke from prescribed burning in the Ouachita National Forest that hung over central Arkansas for several months this spring. Dan Olsen, acting superintendent of National Forests in Arkansas, spoke to the Central Arkansas Sierra Club last Tuesday and reported that total prescribed burns last year were 350,000 acres, while there were only 6,000 acres of wildfires. This seems out of balance, lofting much more CO2 into the atmosphere than is warranted for wildfire containment – we don't have wildfires in Arkansas of nearly the scope of those out west – and possibly causing health problems from the resulting smoke. Of course there are lots of rationales for prescribed burns, but it seems that human health should be one of the primary considerations.

Good News There are now treatments that block intertucin-1 beta in humans, [read the story in the Economist](#).

David Peterson



WHAT ARE PRESCRIBED BURNS AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

UNDERSTANDING PRESCRIBED BURNS

Prescribed burns involve the controlled application of fire to specific land areas under carefully planned conditions. Trained personnel conduct these operations following detailed burn plans that account for weather patterns, fuel moisture levels, and environmental factors. Unlike wildfires that spread unpredictably, prescribed burns follow predetermined boundaries and burn intensities.

ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF PRESCRIBED BURNING

Prescribed burns remove accumulated vegetation that feeds larger, uncontrolled wildfires. Forest floors naturally accumulate dead branches, fallen leaves, and dried grasses over time. Without periodic burning, these fuel loads create conditions for intense, crown-spanning fires that prove difficult to control and extremely dangerous for suppression crews.



Big Love Car Wash Performs on July 25

We are thrilled that **Big Love Car Wash** is heading back to perform in Little Rock on Saturday, July 25! This highly energetic and talented Americana band that includes David and Donna Peterson's fiddle-champion-son Everett, will be performing at Second Presbyterian Church on Saturday, July 25 at 7:00 pm. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Tickets are \$20 and must be purchased in advance with Venmo @Ann-Owen-6 or by check payable to Ann Owen, 2501 N. Diego St. Little Rock.



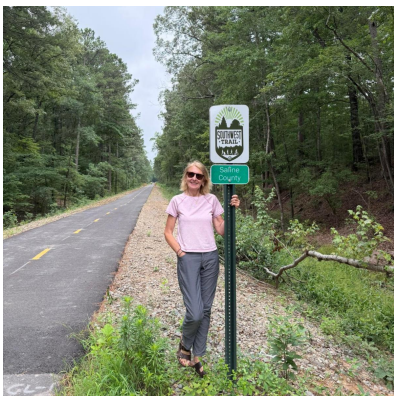
Ann Owen, 2501 N. Pierce St, Little Rock
72207. Call or text Ann at 501-960-0063 with
any questions!

Outings

[For more details, visit Ozarksociety.net](http://Ozarksociety.net)

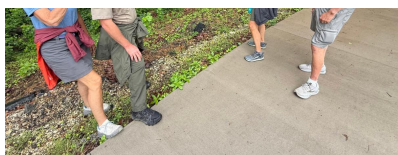
- **Saturday, July 11 - ASCA Outing to Dr. Lester Sitzes III, Bois D'Arc WMA**
Join the Audubon Society of Central Arkansas for a morning birding trip to Bois D'Arc WMA, with target species including Purple and Common Gallinules, Least Bitterns, Anhingas, herons, egrets, and possibly alligators. Very little walking is involved, and participants should bring water, comfortable shoes, binoculars if available, and lunch.
- **Saturday, July 25 - ASCA Beginner Bird Walk at Two Rivers Park**
New and beginner birders are invited to a relaxed 1.5-mile walk through Two Rivers Park to learn birding basics, including binocular use, field marks, and habitat clues. The paved route includes river, woodland, and wetland habitat, with opportunities to see swallows, herons, orioles, woodpeckers, and songbirds.

****Wild Women Wednesday Hikes** - Women are invited to join in the weekly Wednesdays hikes at Pinnacle Mountain State Park, led by park interpreters! For access to the hike-of-the-week gathering time and place, join the [Pinnacle Mountain WW group on Facebook](#) or call the park office at (501) 868-5806. The hiking times vary per season.



**We've had some
wonderful outings, work
days, and activities in the
past month!**





Arkansas Wildlife Federation 90th Anniversary

If you are an Arkansas Wildlife Federation member, don't miss their 90th Anniversary celebration on August 27 from 4:30-6:30 pm at the AMFA. If you aren't a member and would like to join, [you can do so here!](#)



Birding Festival of the South

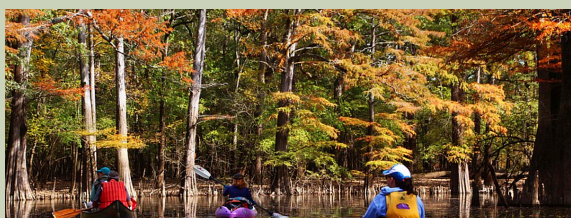
The inaugural Arkansas for the Birding Festival of the South, a celebration of the fall bird migration, will be on October 8 -10! Passes are on sale now — [click here for yours!](#)

Hot Springs boasts unmatched birdwatching opportunities showcasing: 26 miles of trails in Hot Springs National Park, 31.5+ miles of trails at Northwoods Trails, 1.8 million acres of the Ouachita National Forest, 210-acres of botanical gardens at Garvan Woodland Gardens, specialized ponds at the Andrew Hulseley Fish Hatchery, and thousands of acres of shoreline at Lakes Hamilton, Catherine, Ouachita, and DeGray.



The Birding Festival of the South Festival will be held at the Hot Springs Convention Center. This event will include field trip opportunities, panels, workshops, music, and fun for all levels of birders. Registration is required for the field trips and capacities may vary. The festival pass does not include participation in exclusive field trips where transportation is provided.

For more information, contact Alexis Hampo at ahampo@hotsprings.org or 501-321-2277. Follow them on Facebook at [Birding Festival of the South](#).



Fall Potluck at Pinnacle Mountain

Our annual Potluck at Pinnacle is September 1 at 6 pm. Start saving your gently used items for the outdoor clothing and gear sale. This year, we'll also have a pre-potluck paddling excursion!



Special Event in November!

Our chapter, along with other conservation organizations, is bringing **Peter Kaestner, birder extraordinaire**, to Little Rock to speak on November 10. In 2024, Kaestner, a longtime American Birding Association member and frequent Birding magazine contributor, reached 10,000 birds on his life list!!! He will also lead a bird walk with us on November 11. Stay tuned for more details!



Fall Membership Retreat

For our Fall Retreat, we will gather on November 13-14 at Buffalo Point, the closest campground to the recently acquired Panther Creek property. Ozark Society President Brian Thompson will try and get us a group site when they become available to accommodate our board and membership meetings. The 120-acre Panther Creek property is wild, undeveloped woodland adjacent to Buffalo River National Park property, close to Indian Rock House in the center river area. The Ozark Society and its members helped make the purchase by the Buffalo River

Foundation possible, ensuring that it remains permanently protected.

GRAND CANYON RAFTING OPPORTUNITY in 2027

The Ozark Society is pleased to offer the following opportunity to join **Canyoneers** for a **6-night, 7-day motorized raft trip on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon from Lee's Ferry to Diamond Creek on May 2-8, 2027 (next year)**.

This fully guided trip begins and ends in Flagstaff, Arizona and accommodates up to 24 participants. The cost is \$3,375 per person. Early May is considered one of the best times to experience the Grand Canyon, with comfortable temperatures and stunning scenery.

The Ozark Society organized this same trip several years ago, and it was extremely popular. Planning begins well in advance due to high demand, and Canyoneers may accept reservations from other groups, so early sign-up is encouraged.

For more information and to sign up for the trip, please call Canyoneers at 800-525-0924.



CANYONEERS
GRAND CANYON ADVENTURES
SINCE 1938

You can start your own birding life list through AGFC's **Wings Over Arkansas**, an award-based program recognizing bird watchers' contributions to Arkansas's outdoors. Once you enroll and submit a copy of your current Arkansas Bird Checklist or eBird list, you will receive a decorative pin and certificate identifying your level of birding experience.



Arkansas Agriculture, Forests, and Water Conference

JULY 28-30

Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences | Fayetteville, Arkansas



NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

We love including member news, outings, and events in *Paddle Trails*! If you'd like something featured, please send the details about two weeks before the next chapter meeting.

Upcoming Dates

For the August newsletter: submit items to ospulaskichapter@gmail.com by July 19.

Follow our Chapter on Social Media!



Ozark Society | PO Box 2914 | Little Rock, AR 72203 US

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