

Introduction to Bird Watching for Beginners *October 13, 2019*

Submitted by Lynn Burnette

On Sunday afternoon, October 13, Piedmont Bird Club (PBC) and T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society (TGPAS) member Dennis Burnette presented the "Introduction to Bird Watching for Beginners" workshop in the KCE Family Branch Library in Price Park. Despite heavy rain that afternoon, which probably kept some folks home, 17 people attended.

This workshop was a joint activity of the TGPAS and PBC. It was designed to introduce new birders to birds and the hobby of birding. The plan was to begin with a new PowerPoint presentation developed especially for this event and then to go outside into the park for bird identification practice.

Because of the rain, we decided to stay indoors and extend the classroom portion for a general discussion about birding with the participants. We followed this with a tutorial on how to use binoculars effectively. We appreciated Melanie Buckingham of the library staff posting photos of birds around the room specifically for binocular practice.

The workshop was for adults, but in the announcements before the workshop, we said that older children who were accompanied by adults would be welcome to attend. We were pleased to see two young birders in the group. Binoculars and bird field guides were suggested but not required. Audubon provided some binoculars to lend to those without them, and Melanie set out several field guides for practice.

Workshop presenter Dennis Burnette is a retired college professor, a nature educator, and an amateur wildlife photographer. Dennis is past president of TGPAS and a current member of the TGPAS board, and past president and active member of the PBC.

Several experienced members of the TGPAS and PBC attended to act as mentors to the beginners. They helped answer questions during the presentation and assisted participants in learning to find birds in their binoculars and identify birds in the field guides. We appreciate everyone's involvement.