



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry– Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2011-2013

President:

Meagan Duffee

Vice President:

Martha Price

Secretary

Barb Robins

Treasurer

Liz Mangile

Newsletter Editor

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January 2012

VOLUME 2012 ISSUE 1

Unusual Winter in Region Alters Bird Sightings

by Cindy Ford

The 2011 fall has been warm with the early weeks of winter particularly warm (50 and 60 degree temps.). Do birds like these warm temperatures?

Our Mined Land Christmas Bird Count this year seemed to be skewed with an abundance of redtailed hawks. Apparently they have recovered their population numbers from the severe ice storms a few years ago? The cotton rat population may be riding high also since these are the redtailed hawks' favorite food. In addition the overall species numbers seem to be down a bit this year—46 species this year compared to 65 species in 2011. Was this due to environmental conditions or fewer people counting birds?



Snowy owls are exploding out of the North and have made quite a stir as far south as Oklahoma. An ornithologist on

National Public Radio explained that the popu-

lation of lemmings exploded in the last few years. This occurrence, in turn, stimulated the owls to produce more young. Now, the lemming population is declining which provides little food for the large population of snowy owls. The best recourse for them is to extend their range to find food. The owls are in a foreign environment and show little fear. Unfortunately, several have made the news because they have been killed by cars or they have flown into power lines. It is best to give them their space. Bob Mangile is tracking a lot of excitement about these birds on our Sperry-Galligar website. Check it out.

As a personal observation, I have not seen as many species of birds in our bird-friendly fruit trees. But, this lack of activity is likely due to the drought last summer. Our American hollies and crabapples did not produce as many fruits as usual. We have had a mockingbird that has aggressively defended the holly the past three years. This year—no mockingbird...

As you can see, there is no one reason why we have changes in bird sightings this year.

Calendar of Meetings Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

Jan 26: Lifetime Naturalist, Chanda Williams, Joplin MO-- "Jewels in the Sky" a new program about butterfly identification, habitat, their caterpillars and the host plants they need for food source, planning a butterfly garden and tagging monarchs.

Spotlight on Larry Herbert Congratulations on his 100th Christmas Bird Count!

Larry Herbert, a Joplin resident, is one of our most avid birders in the region. Larry spends a good deal of his time studying birds, participating in bird counts, and making birding an avocation. He is active in the Gateway Audubon Chapter, often attends Sperry-Galligar and Southeast Kansas Audubon Chapters, has given special presentations in all three chapters. Larry is undeniably knowledgeable about birds, not just in this region, but ask him about penguins!



Photo by Donna Smith

**Board Meeting Highlights
Barb Robins, Secretary**

Attending were: Mavis Benner, Carolyn & Charles Chips, Meagan Duffee, Cindy & Steve Ford, Julie Hartley, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Martha Price, and Barb Robins.

Meagan called the meeting to order. Treasurer's report was given, programs reviewed, and field trips were highlighted.

We are prepared for the annual bird seed sale at Meadowbrook Mall.

Delia said that Westar is coming on December 10th to build cages. Bring chili or soup to serve all for lunch. Help with building if you can.

Cindy reported that we have 33 subscribers for the e-version of the newsletter. For dues renewals, Bob would like to prorate local membership dues to bring everyone's expiration date to September 1 each year.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25.

**Financial Statement
Liz Mangile, Treasurer**

January, 2012

Beginning Balance----- \$3168.13

Credits

Local & National Dues 65.00
Deposit seed sale & \$100 for
cash box 2541.50
Birdhouse 15.00

Total..... \$2621.50

Debits

Newsletter \$ 15.97
Money for cash box 100.00
Cost for birdseed 1716.98
Truck rental 57.69
Nat. Audubon dues 20.00
Retail sales tax for birdseed sale 190.64
400 stamps for newsletter 176.00

Total----- \$ 2277.28

Ending balance----- \$3512..35

**From my Nest
Meagan Duffee, President**



Hope you all had a nice winter break. It is a good time to get some birding done.

I was excited recently to see several tundra swans. I could see that at least one of them had a band on the leg.

I am starting a new chapter this semester by entering graduate school here at PSU. I will be working on projects that involve interning in taxidermy and wildlife photography. I am really looking forward to getting started.

For this year I encourage you all to participate in our field trips that the Chips have arranged, enjoy our meeting speakers, and do some extra birding in your own backyards.

See you at our future meetings.



It is fun to imagine that you are in the tropics instead of the cold of winter.



Leann Webb won the door prize.

She won a nature calendar and hand painted greeting cards by Carol Newcomb.

**October Featured Speaker:
Bethany Schifferdecker**

The Audubon audience was treated to a different kind of program, one with domestic animals and presented by a 16-year-old. Bethany Schifferdecker, a sophomore at Girard High School and long-time 4H member, told us that "Dog Agility is a Team Event" and demonstrated that fact with videos, still photos, and Rascal and Cody live. Most of us were surprised to learn that there are various classes of dog agility and speed competitions in the area, the country, and throughout the world.

Bethany trains her dogs by the clicker (positive reinforcement) method to perform the required maneuvers through tunnels, over teeter-totters and other obstacles, and has received second place in United Kennel Club national trials. Her dogs also visit patients in nursing homes and other institutions.

If you'd like to watch well-trained dogs from our area perform national-level feats, visit U-tube.

Barb Robins
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**Needed: Audubon Meeting
Refreshment Hostess**

Money provided to buy cookies and other treats.

Please contact Liz Mangile.



Christmas Bird Count Species

Area #1 - (Bob Mangile and Donna Mansell) Total Party Hours: 4.3 hours (all in car) Total Party Miles: 38 (Best Bird - Purple Finch.)
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Species observed:

Canada Goose 460
Mallard 18
Wild Turkey 60
Northern Harrier 5
Red-shouldered Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 33 (1 was Harlan's)
American Kestrel 6
Red-bellied Woodpecker 2
Northern Flicker 1
Blue Jay 2
American Crow 36
Horned Lark 272
Carolina Chickadee 3
Eastern Bluebird 7
Northern Mockingbird 7
European Starling 20
Savannah Sparrow 68
Harris's Sparrow 17
White-crowned Sparrow 34
Dark-eyed Junco 105
Northern Cardinal 14
Red-winged Blackbird 170

Meadowlark 130
Purple Finch 5
American Goldfinch 11
House Sparrow 27

26 species.

1514 individuals.

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Participants in party were:

Donna Mansell
Robert Mangile
=====

Area #3 - (Liz Mangile and Mavis Benner) Total Party Hours: 4.8 hours (all in car) Total Party Miles: 40

Species observed:

Canada Goose 22
Mallard 100
Northern Shoveler 5
Pied-billed Grebe 3
Northern Harrier 11
Red-tailed Hawk 56
American Kestrel 10
Red-bellied Woodpecker 2
Downy Woodpecker 3
Northern Flicker 3
Pileated Woodpecker 3

Blue Jay 5

American Crow 50
Horned Lark 77
Carolina Chickadee 6
Tufted Titmouse 1
Eastern Bluebird 2
Northern Mockingbird 9
European Starling 80
Field Sparrow 1
Savannah Sparrow 6
Song Sparrow 2
White-throated Sparrow 2
Harris's Sparrow 16
White-crowned Sparrow 19
Dark-eyed Junco 22
Northern Cardinal 56
Red-winged Blackbird 202
Eastern Meadowlark 27
Common Grackle 1
American Goldfinch 28
House Sparrow 14

32 species.

844 individuals.

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Participants in party were:

Mavis Benner
Liz Mangile

Westar Builds New Cages at PSU Natural History Reserve

On a chilly Saturday morning this December, a crew of around 20 people joined together to build a new eagle enclosure for the Nature Reach program. Westar Energy's Green Team donated all building materials, and provided about six volunteers to help with the build along with volunteers from Sperry-Galligar, and students from PSU's Nature Reach program. In total, the enclosure is 60' long x 16' wide x 12' tall. It is divided into one large eagle enclosure and one smaller enclosure that will house a bird yet to be determined. The Green Team had already put in two full days of work on the enclosures, setting posts and cutting lumber. The PSU grounds crew had also spent several hours helping to prepare the site for building and bringing in appropriate gravel.

The eagle that is waiting for a new home is nicknamed "Apollo". He is a young male that was banded this year near Clinton Lake. He suffered a broken wing earlier this year that has not healed properly, so he is considered non-releasable and needs a permanent home. When "Apollo" was found he was roughly 4 pounds, about half the weight of a healthy male

eagle. He has been recovering for the past several weeks at Eagle Valley Raptor Center, near Wichita, KS. Provided our permit application is approved by the Federal Migratory Bird office in Denver, Colorado, we hope to get him placed in the coming weeks. We hope to introduce him to the community by Spring, provided his "animal ambassador" training goes well!

Again, I want to send out a big THANK YOU to all of the volunteers that helped make this build possible. A special thank you to the Sperry-Galligar volunteers who helped with the build and also provided food for the workers. It was greatly appreciated by all!



Sightings



SNOWY OWLS
TUNDRA SWANS



To give an idea of the types of birds observed on one day in the middle of the winter, see the article to the left.

Next year join us on the Christmas Bird Count. It is a tradition that "grows" on you.

Send your newsletter articles, bird sightings, and nature notes to C. Ford by Feb 10.

**Application for Membership
Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society**

For first-time local membership, send \$20.00 and you will become a member of both organizations, receive 4 copies of Audubon Magazine annually and 8 copies of Sperry-Galligar Newsletter. *Please make your check to: National Audubon Society.*

___ *YES I wish to become a FIRST-TIME member of both organizations (\$20.00).*

To renew your membership, send \$15.00 and you will become a member of Sperry-Galligar Audubon and receive the regular 8 newsletters per year informing you of all our local activities. *Please make your check to: Sperry-Galligar Audubon*

___ *YES I wish to become a RENEWING member of the local chapter (\$15.00).*

Future National Renewals: Contact National directly for Audubon Magazine.

Mail to:
**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
P.O. Box 205
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762-0205**

Please Print

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

e-mail address _____

Chapter Code: C2ZJ10OZ



Chapter Field Trip Calendar

January 28, 2012: Wildcat Glades Nature Center, Joplin, MO. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at North McDonald's, 3008 N. Broadway in Pittsburg for breakfast. Leave by 8:00 to carpool to the nature center and chert glades. Driving and walking tour, but it is possible to remain in the nature while the rest of the group walks some of the trails.

February 25, 2012: Ponds & Pits of Crawford County. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Applebee's, 2802 N. Broadway in Pittsburg, then travel to various locations to view migrating water birds, raptors, and winter residents. Mostly driving tour. If the weather cooperates, we will once again try to view the Jim Hughes wetland restoration on this same trip.

March 31, 2012: Heron Rookery, West Mineral, KS. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Big Brutus. Emmett Sullivan will then lead us to a great blue heron rookery. We will also look for early shorebirds and other birds at nearby strip pits. Driving and walking tour.

April 28, 2012: Warblers & Spring Migrants, Roaring River State Park, MO. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Applebees in Pittsburg to carpool to Roaring River to see spring warbler varieties and other spring migrants such as scarlet tanager, painted buntings, etc. Driving and walking tour. Habitat is such that one can find a picnic table and just sit and watch for species or take one of the many hiking trails over the hills of the park and look down on species. This will be an all day trip as it is about two hours to the park. Bring snacks, lunch and dress accordingly.

May 19, 2012: Restored Prairie Habitat, Max Good property, Parsons, KS. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Applebees in Pittsburg to carpool to Parsons to view various native flowers, grasses, insects, birds, & trees in a native prairie restoration project.



**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
Newsletter
P.O. Box 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762
Meetings are held the last Thursday
of the month. No meetings in June July, or August. (Nov/Dec meeting date to be announced)
From 7:00 pm to 9 pm, in Room 102, Yates
Hall. PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS.
Refreshments served and Guests Welcome.**



Visit our website:

<http://sperry-galligar.com/>



**Attention All
Members**

If this box is checked, our records indicate that your membership has expired. Please consider paying local membership dues. Our chapter receives 100% of the local dues only. HOWEVER, you can subscribe to both. Either way you get the newsletter.

