



# NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry– Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2011-2013

**President:**

Meagan Duffee

**Vice President:**

Mavis Benner

**Secretary**

Barb Robins

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January 2013

VOLUME 2013 ISSUE 1

## 2012 Christmas Audubon Bird Count Yields More than 60 Species

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is a traditional event that many birders enjoy each year. There are several counts in our region where you can participate. The following list of bird species is the result of a day of birding during the Mined Lands Count in Cherokee County which is always held on New Year's Day. Join one of the Audubon bird counts next year.

Temp. 20 - 32 F; light breeze; lakes and streams with partial ice cover; no snow cover. Overcast all day with light flurries in the afternoon. Seven observers in three parties. 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. Total party hours by car: 19.0, by foot 2.20. Distance by car: 151 miles, by foot 0.75 miles. **Total species: 69.** Individuals: 19,044. Observers: Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Lawrence Herbert, Delia Lister, Elizabeth Mangile, Robert Mangile. Steve Ford was the compiler, but did not participate in the field.

Canada goose (48)  
 Gadwall (11)  
 American wigeon (7)  
 Mallard (28)  
 Northern shoveler (1)  
 Green-winged teal (3)  
 Ring-necked duck (24)  
 Common merganser (1)  
 Northern bobwhite (12)  
 Pied-billed grebe (1)  
 Double-crested cormorant (30)  
 Great blue heron (10)  
 Bald eagle (6)  
 Northern harrier (13)  
 Red-shouldered hawk (1)  
 Red-tailed hawk (34)  
 Harlan's hawk (1)  
 American kestrel (10)  
 Prairie falcon (1)  
 Rock pigeon (2)  
 Eurasian collared dove (12)  
 Mourning dove (18)  
 Great horned owl (1)  
 Barred owl (2)

Belted kingfisher (5)  
 Red-headed woodpecker (21)  
 Red-bellied woodpecker (41)  
 Yellow-bellied sapsucker (1)  
 Downy woodpecker (18)  
 Hairy woodpecker (2)  
 Northern flicker (25)  
 Pileated woodpecker (6)  
 Loggerhead shrike (2)  
 Blue jay (59)  
 American crow (531)  
 Horned lark (913)  
 Carolina chickadee (18)  
 Tufted titmouse (19)  
 White-breasted nuthatch (7)  
 Carolina wren (2)  
 Eastern bluebird (29)  
 American robin (664)  
 Northern mockingbird (15)  
 Brown thrasher (1)  
 European starling (1,187)  
 Cedar waxwing (124)  
 Yellow-rumped warbler (20)  
 American tree sparrow (6)  
 Field sparrow (2)  
 Fox sparrow (12)  
 Song sparrow (49)  
 Swamp sparrow (1)  
 Sparrow sp. (36)  
 White-throated sparrow (23)  
 Harris's sparrow (55)  
 White-crowned sparrow (88)  
 Dark-eyed junco (390)  
 Lapland longspur (895)  
 Northern cardinal (83)  
 Red-winged blackbird (12,120)  
 Meadowlark sp. (441)  
 Rusty blackbird (1)  
 Brewer's blackbird (15)  
 Common grackle (241)  
 Brown-headed cowbird (76)  
 Blackbird sp. (384)  
 Purple finch (1)  
 House finch (8)  
 American goldfinch (23)  
 House sparrow (104)  
 Wilson's snipe (2)  
 Bonaparte's gull (1)

### January Meeting 7:00 p.m. Presentation

January 31 — "Treasures of Yellowstone Park" by Meagan Duffee

Meagan will treat us to beautiful photography showing animals and plants occurring in Yellowstone Park shot when she visited the region last year.

To receive an e-newsletter: send your e-mail address to Cindy Ford, Editor.

THANKS FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES!

**Board Meeting Highlights**  
**Barb Robins, Secretary**

**Attending:** Mavis Benner, Cindy & Steve Ford, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Barb Robins, Emmett & Ruth Sullivan.

**Call To Order (Mavis):** 6:00 p.m.

**Treasurer's Report (Liz):** Checking account balance of \$3,864.65

**Old Business:**

**Bird Seed Sale:** Everything is ready to go; Bob will get the truck tomorrow.

**Bench:** Barb reported that she discussed it with Phyllis Bitner, curator of the Miners Hall Museum in Franklin. She greatly wanted benches in the Miners' Village and selected designs she thought would be historically appropriate. Bob volunteered to make the bench from redwood that was given to him.

**Frog and Turtle Races:** Delia proposed that we make wooden frogs and turtles from a pattern that she has and offer them to schools and organizations to use. Our goal would be to teach children the benefits of leaving wild animals in their habitats. She would need materials. We agreed to discuss it at the next meeting.

**New Business:**

**CBC:** The dates are: Parsons, December 15; Wildcat Glades, December 22; Prairie State Park area, December 28; and SEK mined lands, Jan. 1.

**April Program:** Delia and Steve will present bird songs and identification. Delia will turn over the January program to Meagan Duffee.

**Other:**

Cindy donated some VHS tapes from her department's collection to our lending library.

**November/December Audubon Presentation**  
**Mike Davis**

We gathered much information about the recovery of the California condor from Mike Davis, who is currently a Missouri Master Naturalist member of national, state, and local Audubon Society organizations. He explained that his fascination with the North American condor was heightened by his sighting and photographing them in the Grand Canyon and Zion National Park areas.

Mike reminded us that California condors are new world vultures, evolving from storks, and have a 9 1/2-foot wingspan compared to the Turkey vulture's 6-foot one. They don't build stick nests and are not colony nesters. The oldest fossils found are 43,000 years old; remains have also been found in Florida. Lewis and Clark saw many on their expedition. Mike's excellent photographs and narrative related the story of their decline from the turn of the twentieth century—probably due to natural enemies and humans—to a single breeding pair left in the wild in 1982. Later, both successful and unsuccessful attempts were made to reintroduce them, and there are now approximately 370-80 individuals.

The condors' reintroduction success cannot yet be called a victory; lead ammunition continues to be used by hunters and causes condor deaths when animal remains are eaten that have been poisoned by lead shot. Project Gutzpile is an attempt to have lead ammunition banned but is opposed by the NRA and other political activists. Windmills are a recently added threat to the condor's survival.

What does the future hold for this magnificent bird in the areas of funding, politics, and habitat? Only time will tell.



**Financial Statement**  
**Liz Mangile, Treasurer**

**December 2012**

**Beginning Balance**-----\$3471.34

**Debits**

Newsletter, stamps, cash box, feed sale costs, truck rental, plaques for bench  
 Total..... \$ 2629.27

**Credits**

Local dues, National Audubon payment, feed sale  
 Total..... \$ 3777.70

**Ending balance**-----\$4619.77

**General Meeting Happenings — December 2012**

**Bird Sightings:** Several saw many pine siskins.

**Announcements:**

Christmas bird counts will be this month and next (see Board minutes).

On January 1, for the SEK mined lands area count, birders can gather at the Express Lane in Scammon at 7 a.m.

The bird seed sale will be this Saturday from 9:00-5:00. More inside help would be appreciated. Please bring crafts and baked goods to the mall a little before 9:00.

We still have T-shirts for sale.

The January program will be on Yellowstone.

**Door Prize:** Denise Elder.

## Bob Mangile's Critter Connection — Wasps



Every Bluebird Trail Master encounters various problems that prevent a successful nesting. Snakes, wasps, ants, raccoons, House Sparrows, House Wrens, cows, horses, cats and even humans, that get a kick out of vandalizing the nest boxes.

One problem that would seem relatively simple to remedy is when Paper Wasps attach their nest to the inside roof of the box. When you open the box you find a wasp, or several wasps, daring you to make a move towards their nest. If you are lucky enough not to get stung you might manage to kill the wasp. Some of the time the wasp will escape and your consolation prize is the removal of the nest. But the wasp returns and constructs another nest by the time you check the nest box again. And if you manage to kill it during this monitoring session another wasp is likely to occupy the box before the next nest inspection! It all seems futile!

So... ideas begin running through my head on ways to stop the paper wasps from using the nest box. And I struck upon an idea that I think works. I've tested this idea on several nest boxes during the 2012-breeding season and I just might have found a solution. It is a bit premature to make claims and further testing needs to be done but this just might gain support from Bluebird Trail Masters. And it is so simple!

I've read that people who make great discoveries are much more interested in offering the details of their thought processes that led to the discovery than the discovery itself. Assuming that this just might be a "great" discovery, I'll offer mine! If you think "backwards" (try that for a while) you might question where the wasps "do not" build their nest. They do not attach those nests on anything that isn't solid. I've never observed a wasp nest attached to anything soft and fluffy, e.g., cloth or cotton, but always on something solid. But the inside of a Bluebird nest box is solid hard wood and they always attach the nest to the inside top – wasp nests must hang downward.

(Light bulb!) I contacted my aunt who likes to sew and asked her for some old scraps of black felt. I cut them in pieces to fit on the inside roof of the nest boxes. I actually brought along a pair of scissors and a tube of "shoe glue" I purchased a Wal-Mart. I cut the felt to form fit to inside roof of the bird house and squeezed some shoe glue in the center and along the edges of the felt and pressed it up against the inside of the roof. You must work quickly because shoe glue dries quickly. (Another waterproof glue might work equally as well.) Done deal! Haven't had wasps in any of the boxes with the felt ceilings. And Bluebirds nested in those boxes, too. However, I started a little late in the year and this needs further testing. Also, the entire ceiling must be completely covered or the wasps will attach a nest on the exposed areas. Felt could be applied during the nest box construction. Some nest box construction might make it difficult to apply the felt after they are in the field but if there is a will there is a way! Give it a try and report your findings. ###



Thanks to Carol Newcomb and Cindy Ford for goodies at the last meeting. If you would like to help with refreshments at the meetings, please contact Liz Mangile to get details. If you need to find out if you are already on the list for this year, please check the website.

## Sightings.....



**UNUSUAL BIRDS**  
at your FEEDER



Pine siskin



Rufous-sided towhee



Pileated woodpecker

**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 National Audubon membership**, send \$20.00 and become a member of both organizations, receive 6 copies of Audubon Magazine annually and 8 copies of Sperry-Galligar Newsletter. *Please make your check to: Sperry-Galligar Audubon.*

*YES I wish to become a FIRST-TIME member of National Audubon and Sperry-Galligar Audubon. (\$20.00).*

**For only local or renewal membership**, send \$15.00 for membership of Sperry-Galligar Audubon and receive the 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 Audubon renewals:** Send Audubon mailer forms directly to National.

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



Please Print

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City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_



**Fieldtrips, Events,  
&  
Miscellany**



**December 2012 Birdseed Sale a Success**  
by Bob Mangile

Just a short note to thank the 20+ volunteers that helped with our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Birdseed Sale. We made \$676.29 profit of which 28% was from the generous donations of baked goods, crafts, etc. Also special thanks to Blue Ribbon Farm & Home for supplying our birdseed and Pittsburg's Meadowbrook Mall for allowing us space for our booth. The major ingredient for success in any group activity is teamwork, which is always exemplified by SGAS supporters.



**BENCH DONATED TO MINER'S MUSEUM**

Thanks to Bob Mangile for building this lovely bench and to Barb Robins who arranged for the bench to be donated to the museum in Franklin, KS. The handmade bench will sport a Sperry-Galligar Audubon plaque.



**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**

**Pay membership dues in September.** 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.

