



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry-Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2011-2013

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Megan Corrigan

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October 2013

VOLUME 2013 ISSUE 7

Nighthawk Story by Diane McCallum



I'm used to seeing killdeer scurrying across the pavement when I pull into the Names and Numbers parking lot in the morning, but I wasn't expecting the sight that greeted me in mid-August this year: there was a large brown bird sitting on one of the white lines right next to where I usually park. I pulled the car beside it, within four or five feet, and it didn't move. Since I was so close, I got to examine the resting bird quite well. It was bigger than a killdeer, mottled brown and white, with a long, slender body. I realized it must be a nighthawk and quickly verified that in my "emergency bird book" (which I keep stashed in the glove compartment for such occurrences).

I was concerned that my running car was so close to the nighthawk without bothering it in the least, so I parked a few spaces down and stepped out to take another look. The bird ignored me, staring into the distance as if contemplating some fascinating future—or possibly the next bug it might catch.

This alarmed me, because I don't get that close to birds, no matter how hard I try, and I began to suspect that the bird was injured. I got within three or four feet and it remained motionless, so I hurried into work to find my supervisor. As soon as I explained that I thought there was an injured

bird in the parking lot, she insisted on taking a look, so we both hustled back out to see if the bird was still there. It was, and it again seemed untroubled by our approach.

My supervisor was kind enough to let me make a personal call on company time, so I called Bob Mangile to ask what I should do. He gave me the phone number of a rehabilitator, but then he cautioned me: "You need to walk right up to that bird and touch it."

I was mystified. "But I already got within a few feet and it didn't move."

Bob was persistent. He reminded me that nighthawks rely on camouflage for their safety, so they're used to sitting perfectly still while danger walks right by without seeing them. This made sense to me so I agreed to try what he said.

After getting my supervisor's permission one more time, I went out to my car, dug in the trunk for a pair of gloves, and walked straight toward the nighthawk.

I was about two steps away when the bird unfurled its wings and took off. I stared in awe at its graceful flight, punctuated by calm and even wing beats, as it glided from my sight. It was a beautiful thing to see.



I'm sure glad I never called the rehabilitator; I would have been pretty embarrassed

when the bird flew away and left me standing there to explain why I thought it was injured.

Thanks, Bob! And thanks also to the nighthawk, for allowing me a rare chance to get close to such a fascinating bird.

**October Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Yates 102
PSU
Presentation**

Oct 31 — "Eastern Australia's Unique Birds" by Matt Gearheart. Learn about interesting (sometimes exotic) environments from Tasmania to the Great Barrier Reef. Matt is an architect in Lenexa, KS who is Vice President of the Kansas Ornithological Society.

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

Board Meeting Highlights Barb Robins, Secretary

Attending: Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Meagan Corrigan, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Barb Robins, Emmett & Ruth Sullivan.

Call To Order (Wayne): 6:00 p.m.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance of \$8,737.72; in addition, our final CD of \$1,638 is now deposited to that account.

Membership:

Post Card: It has been sent to national members who are receiving the print newsletter. Some have responded.

Deadline: Do we have a policy for late or unpaid dues? Wayne will remind membership tonight that dues are due now.

Publicity: Thanks to Bob for the Sun newspaper item. He is still sending meeting information to the Joplin Globe, KRPS, and KOAM.

Refreshments: Liz and Mavis will provide tonight, and a sign-up sheet will be circulated.

Programs: Meagan is still working on completing the year's schedule.

Bird Seed Sale (Dec. 7): We're still looking into possibilities for a truck to use.

Field Trips: Delia will announce upcoming events at the general meeting.

President's Annual Report to the National Office:

Wayne's working on it; due date is November 30.

Bylaws Revision: We discussed possibilities for Article III (Board of Directors). Wayne suggested that we individually write text change suggestions and discuss them at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45.

Financial Statement Liz Mangile, Treasurer

October 2013

Beginning Balance \$ 8,892.19

Debits

Newsletter	\$ 16.47
Stamps	138.00

Credits

Membership dues	196.00
CD #2 cash	1,638.06

Total \$ 10,571.78

Thanks to Mavis Benner and Liz Mangile for the refreshments at the September meeting.

September Meeting Presenter Jennifer Rader



Jennifer Rader is the new director of the SEK Nature Center, now under the auspices of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism. She answered the WWHW&W questions most of us had about this new face and position.

She grew up in a very different topography—the Wilson and Wilson Lake area—and is learning the local flora and fauna of the Ozark Plateau. Although young, she has varied experience in the Cheyenne Bottoms/Quivira and Lawrence areas as well as helping develop the state Eco-Meet program. She has also done work in wildlife rehabilitation. We were treated to photos of these areas and activities, and creatures (both live and stuffed) in the Schermerhorn location.

Jennifer is looking forward to continuing the programs at the Nature Center and developing more outreach activities. Although restricted by a shortage of staff (she hopes to acquire a part-time naturalist and more volunteers), she plans to start Kansas Master Naturalist and internship programs. It's possible that the KDWPT could create a hiking and biking trail in the future between Schermerhorn and the Missouri line.

We welcome Jennifer and fervently hope she will eventually acclimate to and embrace those trees and hills.

Barb Robins, Secretary

September Meeting Highlights by Barb Robins

We were welcomed by our new president, Wayne Bockelman, who introduced vice president Meagan Corrigan, treasurer Liz Mangile, and secretary Barb Robins. He then gave us a little of his background and reasons for enjoying birding.

Delia Lister announced the **Pelican Festival** occurring this weekend in Grove, Oklahoma. Watch your e-mail for future trips.

Wayne encouraged members to sign up for the **e-mail version** of the newsletter. He reminded us that **local dues** are due now; we may also join the national organization if we wish.

There will be no **door prizes** till the May picnic.

The **birdseed sale** is December 7 at the mall. If you know of someone who can loan a 3-to-4-ton covered truck, let Wayne or Bob Mangile know.

Bob awarded **50-bird pins** to Emily and Sarah Chips.

The **next meeting** will be October 31; Matt Gearhart will describe his birding trip to Australia.

Refreshments tonight are by Mavis Benner and Liz Mangile. The sign-up sheet for future treats volunteers is going around.

Interesting bird sightings were of Yellow warblers and an extreme close-up of a Pileated woodpecker.

Notes from a Novice - (Stuff you might already know) by Megan Corrigan

As a new board member, and one who has only started looking at birds in the last couple of years, I decided that if I was going to have any credibility at all with the expert birders and longstanding board members, I better study!

Part of studying is trying to remember which sparrow has what color beak, and I'm working on that. But part of studying is trying to learn more about birding in general, and one way I thought I could do that was by reading books about other people who bird.

The Hastings clearance rack serendipitously brought To See Every Bird on Earth: A Father a Son, and a Lifelong Obsession by Dan Koeppel (Penguin, 2006) into my possession. It was summer, I was an incoming board member, so, for ninety nine cents, I bought it and read it and greatly enjoyed it. It's about the author's father, who has seen more than 7,000 birds, and about birding in general. This was not a purely birding book, as there is some family drama and history included that doesn't relate to birding, but for me, who didn't know there were people trying to see 7,000 and 9,000 birds, it was educational.

I always wondered about when birds can count or not count. If you hear a bird, but can't see it, does it count? If you find a warbler dead in your driveway (this happened to me) can you count it if you can figure out what kind it is? What about the emu we passed in a Kansas farmyard? It was definitely alive... How about if you saw a Common Snipe in Kansas before 2003, when it was decided that all snipes in North America are a different species – Wilson Snipes – would you have to see it again once it was declared its own species before you can count it? Could you still count the Common Snipe, even though you had never been to Europe, which, according to the new list, is the only place they occur? There's a whole enter-

taining chapter or more that delves in to the mechanics of how these things work. I was glad to know I was not the only person asking these types of questions!

Turns out, the American Birding Association publishes rules on these very issues and they are available online at <http://www.abar.org/bigday/rules.pdf>. The short answers are: Yes, you can identify a bird by song; nope, it can't count if it was dead, though if it was just "injured, sick, oiled, or otherwise incapacitated" it could count; the emu can't count, because it was fenced in, and also because emus aren't "accepted by the ABA Checklist Committee for lists within [this] area".

The last question, about the species split, which didn't happen to me, but the likes of which happened pretty frequently in the book, is the most interesting. From what I understood in the book, every year the ABA publishes a new official list of birds, and, if you took notes, and definitely saw a snipe in Kansas before 2003, you DO get to count it now as a Wilson Snipe on your life list without finding another one! On the other hand, if you still want to count the Common Snipe, you better buy a plane ticket to Finland and take your binoculars.



Common snipe

Wilson's snipe

Emu

Sightings.....



Fall Migration



Snow geese



Canada geese



White pelicans



Megan Corrigan, Sperry-Galligar Vice-President, is presenting one of our famous Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter t-shirts to our September speaker, Jenn Rader.

You, too, can wear one of these t-shirts for a small fee.

See Liz Mangile for details.



Send your newsletter articles, bird sightings, and nature notes to C. Ford by Nov 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**

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**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 Au-
gust. (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.

