



# NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry- Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2011-2013

**President:**

Wayne Bockelman

**Vice President:**

Megan Corrigan

**Secretary**

Barb Robins

**Treasurer**

Liz Mangile

**Newsletter Editor**

Cindy Ford

[cford@pittstate.edu](mailto:cford@pittstate.edu)

**Jan Meeting  
7:00 p.m.  
Yates 102  
PSU**

**\*\*Presentation\*\***

**Jan 30 — "Bird Species:  
Who Decides and How?"  
by Dr. Neil Snow, Botanist,  
Pittsburg State University.**

**Birders know that biologists lump and split species. But why does the occur? Will there be changes in species in the future?**

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

Jan 2014

VOLUME 2014 ISSUE 1

## Christmas Bird Count

Steve Ford

This was the 114<sup>th</sup> year of the National Audubon Christmas Bird Count, and we were a big part of it with a record nineteen participants in the Mined Land Count, held, as always, on New Years Day. We even got some TV and newspaper publicity. There's always some interesting, sometimes unexplained observations. Despite our the large attendance, including three strong birders who got up early and drove all the way from the Kansas City area, the number of species seen this year was less - 66 versus 69 last year (with only seven observers) and the total number was less - a little over 10,000 this year vs. almost twice that last year. It may be that this total number doesn't really mean much because often it reflect estimates of large numbers of blackbirds. Even so, I remember noting to Cindy and Billie during our leg of the count that even though the weather seemed good for seeing birds - fairly sunny, little wind, relatively mild temperatures - it didn't seem like we were seeing as many as we might have expected, at least in the morning. Things just seemed a little off early-on, although it eventually picked up a little.

Although not too much should be made of year-to-year differences, here are just a few observations. The group saw the most Canada geese ever, 1769 (48 last year). We saw 17 bald eagles (six last year), and lots of red-tailed hawks, 92 vs 34 last year. I'm wondering if many

of these large birds were counted more than once due to the increased number of observers this year, especially if the birds were counted in flight as they passed over more than one section of our circle. It is interesting that we counted only two species of ducks this year, mallards and two pintails vs seven species last year, although this may be a function of more ice this year than last.

Our large group saw far more red-headed woodpeckers, chickadees, and titmice than last year, and a lot more mockingbirds, but possibly this would be expected with the additional eyes in the field. Our Kansas City friends reported five cackling geese, which is a new species for us. These look like very small Canada geese.

A big thanks to all our new visitors, including the first-timers, and as always a big thanks to all the dedicated veterans who do the count year after year. It's always fun and satisfying, despite the bleak mid-winter landscape, to see the great diversity and abundance of the truly wild and often beautiful birds that call it home.



### Bird Seed Sale — Another Success

**Bob Mangile**

It was cold, I mean very cold, but that didn't deter our dedicated volunteers from helping out at the Annual Birdseed Sale on Dec. 7 at Pittsburg's Meadowbrook Mall.

I'd like to thank everyone who donated items to sell at the booth, the 18 volunteers that worked the booth and those that nearly froze working at the truck, as well as our steady customer base that purchased over 2.5 tons of birdseed. Also I'd like to thank Blue Ribbon Farm & Home for their complete cooperation in helping us with another successful birdseed sale. When you shop at Blue Ribbon let them know that you are a Sperry-Galligar supporter and that we truly appreciate their help.



## Board Meeting Highlights Barb Robins, Secretary

**Attending:** Mavis & Ray Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy & Steve Ford, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Barb Robins.

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

**Treasurer's Report (Liz):** Checking account balance of \$2,626.81. Two CDs have now been opened at \$5,000 and \$3,000.

**Speaker:** Because of impending bad weather, Nappadol Paothong will not be here tonight. His and our schedules will not allow for another speaking date this year, unless he can come for the May picnic. Megan will check.

**Annual report:** It has been submitted to the Audubon office. Discussion ensued concerning the number of volunteer hours spent this last year.

**Birdseed sale:** Are we ready to go? Bob will put prices on the web site. We could use a few more volunteers. Steve said 49 birdhouses have been made; Wayne suggested that we try to place some of them in the Krimson Kultuur store after the sale.

**Dues Change:** Bob speculated that perhaps lowering the local dues will increase membership. Discussion indicated otherwise.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45.

## Financial Statement Liz Mangile, Treasurer

### January 2014

**Beginning Balance**----- \$2731.81

#### Debits

11/14/13—Newsletter----- \$ 5.00  
 12/03/13—Money for cash box---- \$ 100.00  
 12/10/13—Feed cost & truck rental \$2037.50  
 12/10/13—Ks. Sales tax----- \$ 224.27  
**Total Debits**----- \$2366.77

#### Credits

12/10/13—Local dues----- \$ 15.00  
 12/10/13—Feed sale money & \$100.00 cash  
 \$3317.10  
 12/15/13—Yearly money from National  
 Audubon- \$ 447.75  
**Total Credits**----- \$3779.85  
**Ending Balance**----- \$4144.89

Time to  
get your  
dues paid  
for the  
year.  
Don't miss  
out on a  
thing!



*Many thanks to Lucy Bednehoff for the delicious refreshments in November.*

## November Meeting Presenter Steve Ford



Even though we strive to develop and encourage appreciation and support for Nature, she was not on our side tonight. Celebrated photographer Noppadal Paothong used good judgment in not risking the ice and snow headed our way, so Steve Ford graciously volunteered to make a presentation entitled, "Landscape Aftermath of Kansas Coal Mining". He recently was involved in a series of lectures in the Art Department on the subject, and he's had an interest in coal mining since he played

in the strip pits in Indiana in his childhood.

Steve concentrated on telling us how the mining aftermath got that way and what we do with it today. Past mining activities have turned the land upside down and made trenches which in earlier years were simply walked away from. The upside to that practice is the environment we have today: places for recreation, animal habitat, and aesthetic scenes of trees and hills.

Steve put coal in context by explaining surface geology and rock formations occurring 300 million years ago. Limestone, sandstone, and shale—all sedimentary formations—are the results of the sea that was once here. The coal was formed by rotting vegetation, and the beds start southwest of Scammon and run past Arcadia, with 13-



14 layers of various thicknesses, or seams.

We saw aerial views of the Pittsburg area today, which showed tailings, shaft mines, strip trenches, and cave-ins. Camp and company towns sprang up and flourished but were declining by 1920. In 1969, laws were passed mandating the return of the land

to its original topography, including topsoil replacement. Land before that year was "grandmothered" in and gives us the scenery we see today. Much original unclaimed land—16,00 acres—has been acquired and maintained by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism for public use, such as fishing, hunting, hiking, and birding. Steve showed us some of the nongame birds—Green Heron, Hummingbird, Red-Headed Woodpecker, Prothonotary Warbler—that would not reside in our area were it not for the upheaval of the land.

Although some of us were disconcerted to see that our houses sit atop old mine shafts, it was good to be reminded that our corner of the state is unique in many ways, especially topological.

Barb Robins

## Swans Sighted near McCune

Several folks have spotted trumpeter swans near McCune. They seem to be settled north of McCune on Hwy 126 near the S-curve heading east into Pittsburg. The sightings have been noted for about two to three weeks. The birds are migrating south, using this area for feeding and resting. They will likely fly out of the area in the next couple weeks.



## To Sum it Up

Each year our Chapter completes a report to the National Audubon Society describing our activities. Here is a review of the year July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.

Our local Chapter, Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society, has 56 dues-paying members. The southeast Kansas area served by our Chapter has 97 National Audubon members. They receive *Audubon Magazine*, among their member benefits. Only 14 members have joined both groups.

Our members put in at least 350 volunteer hours during the past year. This includes helping with the birdseed sale, providing refreshments for our meetings, leading field trips, writing articles and preparing the newsletter, updating our website, and seeking publicity for our programs in public media. Three of our members, Bob and Liz Mangile and Donna Smith, participated in two week-long day camps for young people, called Nature Reach, co-sponsored by Pitt State and SGAS. When adding up volunteer hours we even count the time our Board of Directors meets to discuss business of the club. By the way, members are invited to volunteer their time by attending these meetings, an hour before each monthly meeting in the third floor lobby of Heckert-Wells (beneath the Mosasaur).

Our club maintains a web site, frequently updated by Bob Mangile. I feel confident that every member could learn at least one new thing by poking around these pages. Visit: [sperry-galligar.com](http://sperry-galligar.com).

Early in the morning of each January 1, intrepid SGASers venture forth to perform our annual Christmas bird count. At a much more reasonable hour on some languid, late-summer evening we count chimney swifts. Other field trips this past year included the Neosho Wildlife Area, Bone Creek Reservoir, and the Riverton area near Spring River.

Whether in our mailbox or online in living color, each month we were treated to our newsletter, *News from the Flock*. Kudos to all who contributed articles and to Cindy Ford who finds illustrations and puts it all together. Yes, you too can contribute and become a published author!

To most of us, the reward for being a SGAS member is the top notch programming each month. We squirmed as we saw and handled live snakes and turtles. We took a safari to South Africa, Kenya, and to the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania. Closer to home, we flew with the wild Condor above the Grand Canyon and Zion National Parks, and went birding in Yellowstone. We learned how to attract humming birds to our back yards before our whirlwind birding trip to Ecuador, where hummers are nearly as big as Hummers. We were tested with a birding quiz and saw the rewards of having a bird feeder, a yard, and talent with a camera.

Here's to another year, at least as good.

Wayne Bockelman, President

## Sperry-Galligar Bluebird Boxes Sell like Hotcakes

Modeled after the ones produced a couple years ago, this year's bluebird boxes were fashioned from recycled pallet wood from the SEK Recycling Center. The boxes are an Audubon design with predator guards around the entrance. The side opens to clean the box. Fifty boxes were produced for this year's Annual Bird Seed Sale. About half sold during the sale. They sold for \$5.00 each. What a bargain.

Wayne Bockelman proposed taking the rest of the boxes to Kulture Kultuur, a newly opened PSU Business Student Club shop on West 4th Street in Pittsburg. The shop is operated on a commission basis so the boxes sold for \$10.00 where the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Club earned \$7.00. They sold out



by Christmas. The shop is requesting more bluebird boxes to sell in February.

A big thanks goes to the SEK Recycling Center, Bob Mangile for cutting out box pieces, Steve Ford for painting the boxes, Emmett Sullivan and Cindy Ford for helping to

assemble the boxes. If you would like to help make more bluebird boxes, talk to Bob or Steve.

Hopefully with more bluebird boxes set up, bluebirds will find new homes this spring.



## Sightings.....



### Similarities



Northern shrike



Loggerhead shrike

Take a second look. Do not confuse a shrike with a mockingbird. Most of our shrikes in this area are the loggerhead shrike.



Northern mockingbird

**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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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



**Events,  
&  
Miscellany**

**Eagle Days at Stella, MO  
January 25, 2014**



**WANT A NEW APP FOR YOUR I-PHONE?**

This one helps you to identify birds.

<http://cornell.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b35ddb671faf4a16c0ce32406&id=6eb132d617&e=d00c2c369c>

The app contains 285 species of the most common birds of North America. It is designed to give choices of bird size, shape, etc. to determine what the bird species may be.

Ask Diane McCallum about her new novel. It is a sequel to her first novel.



**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.

