



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry– Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2013 - 2015

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Jan 2015

VOLUME 2015 ISSUE 1

Audubon Christmas Bird Count — Steve Ford

A rather bleak winter day accompanied eight birders on this year's Mineland Christmas Bird Count on New-Year's Day – fairly cold and gray, but at least the roads were not icy. I'm always gratified by the diversity of life that these days yield. Fifty-seven species in all, including trumpeter swans, bald eagles, cedar waxwings, and golden-crowned kinglets. The number of counters was only half of what we had last year, and this was no doubt a factor in spotting fewer birds, yet our total was respectable. That said, it's not just about numbers is it? I always see something new, interesting, and beautiful. For example, most views of yellow-bellied sapsuckers (try saying that with cold lips – it comes out "sacksupper.") are pretty drab, but I got a look at a wonderfully colorful male that filled the lens of my binoculars. This common species was one of my day's "best birds." Thanks to all participants, and special thanks to our "out-of-town" friends who are regulars on the Minedland Count, Rick Tucker from Parsons, and Larry Herbert from Joplin.

SOUTHEAST KANSAS MINEDLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

January 1, 2015

Temp. 24 – 32 F; light breeze; lakes mostly frozen, streams open; no snow cover. Cloudy all day. Eight observers in four parties. 7:45 AM – 3:00 PM. Total party hours by car: 18.25; by foot: 1.25. Distance by car: 117.0 miles; by foot: 0.75 miles. **Total species: 57**, individuals: 4,722. Observers: Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy Ford, Steve Ford (compiler), Lawrence Herbert, Delia Lister, Robert Mangile, Richard Tucker.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|
| Snow Goose | 50 | Horned Lark | 180 |
| Canada Goose | 198 | Carolina Chickadee | 36 |
| Trumpeter Swan | 3 | Tufted Titmouse | 18 |
| Mallard | 15 | White-breasted Nuthatch | 4 |
| No. Bobwhite | 25 | Carolina Wren | 12 |
| Pied-billed Grebe | 12 | Golden-crowned Kinglet | 2 |
| Great Blue Heron | 4 | E. Bluebird | 36 |
| Bald Eagle | 4 | Am. Robin | 90 |
| No. Harrier | 5 | No. Mockingbird | 17 |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | 4 | Eur. Starling | 140 |
| Red-tailed Hawk | 42 | Cedar Waxwing | 124 |
| Am. Kestrel | 13 | Yellow-rumped Warbler | 5 |
| Killdeer | 9 | Am. Tree Sparrow | 2 |
| Rock Pigeon | 4 | Field Sparrow | 9 |
| Mourning Dove | 61 | Song Sparrow | 12 |
| White-winged Dove | 2 | White-throated Sparrow | 20 |
| Great Horned Owl | 1 | Harris's Sparrow | 39 |
| Barred Owl | 1 | White-crowned Sparrow | 170 |
| Belted Kingfisher | 1 | Dark-eyed Junco | 120 |
| Red-headed Woodpecker | 13 | No. Cardinal | 107 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 65 | Red-winged Blackbird | 550 |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | 4 | Meadowlark sp. | 356 |
| Downy Woodpecker | 19 | Rusty Blackbird | 29 |
| Hairy Woodpecker | 3 | Common Grackle | 18 |
| No. Flicker | 25 | Brown-headed Cowbird | 12 |
| Pileated Woodpecker | 2 | Blackbird sp. | 1,700 |
| Loggerhead Shrike | 2 | Purple Finch | 4 |
| Blue Jay | 117 | Am. Goldfinch | 129 |
| Am. Crow | 206 | House Sparrow | 133 |

January Meeting
Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Yates 102, PSU
****Presentation****

Jan. 29 — "Galapagos— Darwin's Enchanted Islands?" by Rick Hines, Attorney and Board Member of the Kansas Chapter of Nature Conservancy. He will center his presentation on the unique Galapagos flora and fauna and their influence on Darwin's theory of natural selection.

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, Megan Corrigan, Cindy & Steve Ford, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Barb Robins

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

Minutes: Received via e-mail.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance of \$3,429.88.

President's Annual Report to National: Wayne has finished it and created a spread sheet with the year's financial transactions, which he shared with the board.

Next Meeting's Speaker: Rick Hines will tell us about his Galapagos trip.

Tonight's Refreshment Providers are Sarah Chenoweth and Denise Elder.

Bylaws: Since revisions have been approved, we need to officially vote in Mavis Benner and Emmett Sullivan as board members at large; committee chairpersons Diane McCallum (membership); Megan Corrigan (program); Delia Lister (field trips); Bob Mangile (publicity); Delia Lister (education); Steve Ford (conservation and development); Cindy Ford (publications); and Liz Mangile (finance). Moved, seconded, and approved.

Field Trips: The CBC, as usual will be on January 1; and one in February, after Brad Stefanoni's presentation, will be scheduled.

Photo Workshop: Seemed to be successful.

Neosho Wildlife Area: It was moved, seconded, and approved that we support the SEK Audubon Chapter's letter of concern about birding opportunities being diminished after road closings in the refuge, and their suggestion that a roadside wildlife viewing berm be constructed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55.

Financial Statement Liz Mangile, Treasurer January 2015

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Beginning Balance----- | \$ 3,601.68 |
| Debits | |
| Photo Workshop | \$ 200.00 |
| Newsletter | 7.30 |
| Cash Box | 100.00 |
| Bird Seed Sale Feed Costs | 1,707.50 |
| Truck for Bird Seed Sale | 97.68 |
| Sales Tax for Bird Seed Sale | 236.38 |
| Total | \$ 2,348.86 |
| Credit | |
| Local dues | \$ 60.00 |
| Money from Photo Workshop | 135.00 |
| Income from Bird Seed Sale + \$100.00 Cash Box | 3,117.25 |
| Total----- | \$ 3,312.25 |
| Ending Balance----- | \$ 4,565.07 |

December Meeting Presenter Chris Pistole



Once again John James Audubon visited us, this time to tell about his adventures in America's frontier West up the Missouri River in 1843 to collect and sketch mammal specimens. Not everyone knows that he published "Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America" after his "Birds of America" was finished.

Mr. Audubon related stories of embarking from St. Louis, travelling with traders and Indians, and gave us vivid descriptions of the sights, the people, accommodations, sounds, and smells on the river journey. He brought along Isaac Sprague and another artist to assist him and fill in backgrounds for his drawings.

Bird species such as peregrines and vultures were sighted around Jefferson City, and he met traders starting out on the Santa Fe Trail in Independence. In northwest Missouri he was able to experience the thrill of seeing millions of Carolina parakeets and passenger pigeons. (Now we know what use sycamore seed balls once had: the parakeets loved them.)



Near Ft. Leavenworth, Audubon discovered a new species and named it Harris's finch (later changed to sparrow).

Through the trip Audubon used William Clark's journal to compare notes. When he reached the Platte River and the prairies, he spotted black-tailed hares, elk, wolves, and hordes of "buffalo". He ended his journey at Ft. Union and was 58 years of age.

After J. J. Audubon's accounting of his adventures, Chris Pistole emerged, who directs education activities at Wildcat Glades Nature Center. We learned more about Audubon—his bouts of depression and his interest in science, such as his ground-breaking bird-banding efforts. He reminded us of the origins of the Audubon Society—the work of the New England and New York women who aspired to end the wholesale slaughter of birds for hat adornment.

Chris is a teacher in heart and soul, and his love of birds has existed his entire life. His "spark bird"—the one that initiated his serious birding pursuits—is the rose-breasted grosbeak. On the way home, audience members no doubt contemplated their own spark bird experiences.



THANK YOU,
Sarah Chenoweth & Denise Elder
FOR THE DECEMBER REFRESHMENTS.



A Brief Encounter

In glancing out our back door recently we saw some activity in our strip-pit lake. It turned out to be a little pied-billed grebe diving repeatedly, which, of course, they do, but it was also running and fluttering along the waters' surface, which you don't often see them do, especially since it was not getting airborne. (Perhaps it was injured?) The source of this agitation we soon saw was a mature bald eagle that we watched fly low over the narrow lake bank, then fly back, eventually perching in a tree just out of our sight. We did not learn the final outcome, although we suspect the eagle eventually flew away. OK, maybe not high drama, but fun to watch for a short time.

Steve Ford

This blurb was taken from the Trumpeter Swan Society email. Wisconsin's oldest survivor of Trumpeter Swan program. It has been 25 years since Wisconsin began its successful Trumpeter Swan Restoration program. It has been a journey of generosity, daring, dedication, adventure, and innovation. Swan 82K, hatched from an egg collected in Alaska for the Wisconsin Trumpeter Program, turned 25 in June 2014. She was recently seen in Burnett County, in northwest Wisconsin.

Bob Mangile and Rick Tucker saw trumpeter swans recently on the bird count. Watch for the swans to pass through this area on migration.



Surprise...

Of the many profound stories that get repeated in the back of the bird-seed truck on sale day, Ken Tersinar told an interesting one. Seems while out on his tractor in a large field awhile back he suffered some rather severe pain from what turned out to be a kidney stone. He climbed out of the tractor and laid down on his back in the field for some respite, closing his eyes for some time. When he eventually opened them, peering into the sky he was greeted with the somewhat unnerving view of vultures circling directly overhead. Fortunately, of course, they had come a little "early to the party" so-to-speak, as Ken lived to sell bird seed.

I ran across a poem that Ken might appreciate:

***The vulture eats between his meals,
And that's the reason why
He very, very, rarely feels
As well as you and I.***

***His eye is dull, his head is bald,
His neck is growing thinner.
Oh! What a lesson for us all
To only eat at dinner!!***

Hillaire Belloc
More Beasts for Worse Children (1897)

Steve Ford

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Bird Sightings: Lots of the usual winter species, especially an abundance of American goldfinches and red-headed woodpeckers. Trumpeter swans were sighted outside of town.

The photo workshop held November 27 was a success; there were plenty of learning opportunities.

There are 33 paid chapter members, 46 counting those listed in households.

The birdseed sale is this Saturday. Wayne offered flyers to people to post at their workplaces. We still need more volunteers for the sale.

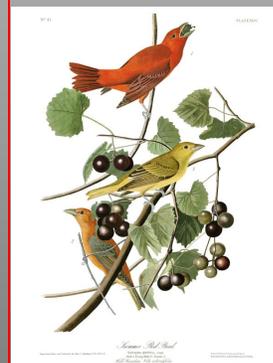
Refreshments were provided by Sarah Chenoweth and Denise Elder.

The Christmas Bird Count will be held as usual on January 1. Meet at the Express Lane, west of Scammon. Wayne recognized the passing of Ann Willis, who was one of the founders of our chapter and was instrumental in organizing the "Audubon Adventures" in schools for 5th and 6th graders.

Sightings.....



Can you name the bird species in the Audubon prints?



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**

Thank You Volunteers

The December 6th. Sperry Galligar Audubon Birdseed Sale is in the books and it was a good one. About 20 volunteers worked in shifts to make it a great success. This year, as has been the case over the years, volunteers stood outside at the truck to dispense birdseed to customers that purchased the birdseed from volunteers working the booth inside the Mall. Thanks go to those who helped at the sale as well as those who donated items to sell at the booth. And thanks to Blue Ribbon Farm & Home of Pittsburg for their cooperation in supplying our birdseed.

Bob Mangile

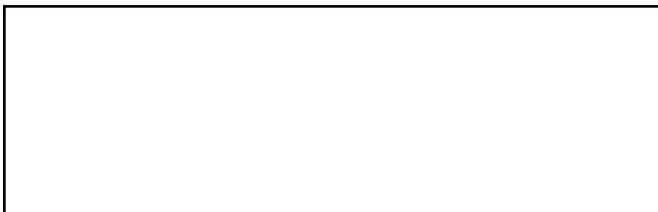


Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
Newsletter
P.O. Box 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762
Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month. No meetings in June July, or August. (Nov/Dec meeting date to be announced) From 7:00 pm to 9 pm, in Room 102, Yates Hall. PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS. Refreshments served and Guests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

Photo Workshop — Looking for a Sequel

Mike Gullett, PSU Communication Department, hosted a Photo Workshop for Sperry-Galligar Audubon members and the general public at the PSU Natural History Research Reserve, November 22, 2014. Delia Lister provided the workshop facilities, Cindy and Steve Ford brought lunch. The informal sessions included information on types of cameras, techniques, strategies for taking photos, and hands-on assistance. After lunch, the group took cameras outside to practice what they had learned. Many participants were very appreciative of Mike's advice and expertise and expressed an interest for another photo workshop in the spring. Maybe you would like to come in the spring?

Comments from those who attended:

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Mike Gullett wrote,
It was my pleasure to present to the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter on Saturday, November 22, 2014. The members were attentive and had such great questions. It made my day much easier. I enjoyed conversing, looking at their photos, and photographing with the members in the afternoon. Thanks for asking me to come, the tasty lunch and teaching me about "Cypress Knees".

--

Donna Smith wrote,
The biggest thing I learned about digital photography is that I have a lot to learn. I came away from the class with some things I want to try and definitely felt like the class surely benefited everyone in some way. It was a great project for the Audubon Society but frankly, most people would expect to pay more for such a class, even without the great lunch we had thanks to Cindy and Steve.

--

Mary Kilcher wrote,
The workshop was great. Anyone with a disposable camera would have also benefitted from this workshop. The meal was delicious. The company was great. It was very informative. Cindy Ford told us all about Bald Cypress. Delia let us photograph her chickens. "Mike" is a real professional in photographer. Thank you for all the time you put in organizing the entire workshop.

--

Diane McCallum wrote,
I am so glad I attended the photography workshop! I learned a lot and will be much more confident with my new camera now. It was nice to get one-on-one advice. When we were all outside taking photos, I realized how much I enjoyed spending time with people who were really looking at the scenery, appreciating the small details and recognizing that you can find a good photo almost anywhere if you look for it.



Photo taken by Lindsey Walls

OWL PROWL



Twenty-one people met at Pittsburg State's Nature Reserve on **Saturday, January 17**, for an owl prowl. Despite a nearby dog and the occasional train and jet sounds, it was a good night for listening: clear, still and not too horribly cold. After admiring the stars, the group stood

quietly to listen for owls. Steve Ford tried using calls from his iPad and Bob Mangile made some impressive vocal calls that got responses from wild owls. The group heard barred owls and screech owls. They then walked to the caged birds and heard quite a ruckus from the captive barred owl, although the screech owls and great horned owl declined to contribute. The group rounded off the evening with coffee, cookies and conversation.

Diane McCallum