



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry– Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2015 - 2017

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Jan 2017

VOLUME 2017 ISSUE 1

SOUTHEAST KANSAS MINEDLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 117th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count is in the books (it was the 28th Minedland Count). It started with a snafu (a snafu is not a bird). Despite what we'd been told, our usual meeting place, the Express Lane in Scammon, was not open. Thank goodness the morning was relatively warm and dry so organizers could work off the hoods of cars. We may have to meet somewhere else or a different day next year. Thanks to Cindy Ford and Delia Lister for getting things off the ground. I was laid up from a shoulder injury and could not make this year's count.

The weather was quite good this year – warm, dry, clear, little wind. You'd think we would see lots of birds, but no more than usual, in fact the exact number as last year,

sixty species. While it is hard to determine what year-to-year differences may be significant there are some interesting observations. Perhaps our "best birds" were a prairie falcon, a vesper sparrow and a Lincoln's sparrow. Lots of cardinals and meadowlarks as usual, but zero red-headed woodpeckers (we saw eighteen last year). These woodpeckers are known for wide

population fluctuations, so probably this scarcity is of no consequence. No bobwhites were seen, and for some reason sightings of blue jays were down – thirty-nine (one-hundred thirty four last year). Despite all the open (unfrozen) water, few ducks were seen (some mallards and shovellers) and no kingfishers. Canada geese and pied-billed grebes were fairly common.

I'm particularly proud of the number of participants down here in our little corner of paradise – sixteen (thirteen last year), a mix of old faithfuls and new friends. Many thanks to all. Thanks too to Delia for her computer help sending data off to National Audubon and the Kansas Ornithological Society. Since our counting period is always a bit late in the season KOS is



always anxious for us to get our numbers in ASAP. The names of all participants are sent to both National and KOS: Henry Arnknecht, Mavis and Ray Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy Ford, Andy George, Collins and Joyce Haynes, Dave Hennes, Lawrence Herbert, Cyndie Ivey, Delia Lister, Liz and Bob Mangile, and Emmett Sullivan. **Steve Ford**

January Meeting
Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Yates 102
Pittsburg State Univ
****Presentation****

Jan 26 — "Black Snakes and Nesting Birds: How Studying Snakes can inform Bird Conservation" by Dr. Andrew George, Assistant Professor Biology, Pittsburg State University, will talk about his research involving the leading cause of bird mortality: nest predation by snakes - especially the W. rat snake.

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

Volunteers Help with Facelift

Several Auduboners and Pittsburg State University folks pulled invasive vines from around the Sperry-Galligar house at 1413 College Street on December 10th. The grounds have become overgrown over the years since our chapter's

namesakes lived there, but we have gotten a start now on reclaiming the area. We will try to follow up with herbicide this spring. More work days are slated if you would be able to help for a few hours. Thanks to Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Diane McCallum, Andy George, Cindy Ford, and Delia Lister.

Steve Ford

Board Meeting Highlights
Barb Robins, Secretary

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

Call To Order (Wayne): 6:00

Minutes (Barb): October's meeting read and approved.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance of \$5,451.96

Tonight's Meeting: "Morel Mushrooms—Hunting Tips and Tricks" by Jason Manderscheid

Publicity was "spotty this week" because of the program not being confirmed till later. Posters on campus and PPL; no notice in the Morning Sun. Emmett won third place in the Kansas Native Plant Society photo contest in the flora category; we're looking forward to his submissions in the January newsletter issue.

Refreshments: Mary Kate Sullivan. We still need one more volunteer for the April meeting.

Dues are still due. Last month, we had a couple of new members. 15 previous members still haven't paid.

Field Trips: The CBC will be held on December 31. Delia is presenting a raptor program at the George Washington Carver Monument on January 21. The first annual Audubon bird count will be on January 17. Wayne is participating—any other volunteers?

Birdseed Sale, December 3: Everything is arranged except for being short indoor volunteers; the signup sheet will circulate again tonight.

Curtains For Lab at the Natural History Reserve: Delia reported that this has been taken care of, and the fishing line disposal system has been approved.

Annual Report to Audubon: Wayne is getting ready to get ready to work on it.

Sperry-Galligar Property Cleanup: Steve announced that there will be one on Saturday, December 10, at 10:00 and invited us to participate.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50.

Financial Statement
Liz Mangile, Treasurer
January 2017

Beginning Balance----- \$5457.16

Credits----- \$3443.95

Local dues-----\$ 30.00

Feed sale, local dues,& cash box-----\$2851.20

Donation & local dues-----\$ 115.00

Yearly credit from Nat'l Audubon-----\$ 447.75

Debits----- \$1875.51

Newsletter-----\$ 5.14

Feed sale cash box-----\$ 125.00

Paid for feed-----\$1518.00

Ks. State Sales tax-----\$ 224.37

Statement fee-----\$ 3.00

Ending Balance----- \$7025.60

December Presenter: Jason Manderscheid



Morels: you either love them or really don't care. There is a passionate following, and our speaker, Jason Manderscheid, can certainly be counted in the forefront. For the rest of us, he gave much helpful information on what, how, and where to hunt.

There are seven different species of morels, and they are found around the world, especially in the Northern Hemisphere. They appear in the early spring and can be yellow, black, white, brown, or gray.

Although very distinctive in appearance, there are similar species, such as the so-called false morels and the wrinkle thimble cap—some species can cause unpleasant symptoms if not death if eaten, so caution must be taken.

Morels prefer old-growth forests, orchards, disturbed ground, landscape beds, even your own backyard. They have a symbiotic relationship with trees and grow on their decaying matter. Some local trees that seem to be preferred are elm, cottonwood, ash, sycamore, cedar, oak, and apple.

The best time to search for morels in this area can be anywhere from mid-March through mid-May. The soil temperature needs to be around 45 to 50 degrees, with daytime highs of 70 degrees and nighttime lows of 50 degrees. A day or two of good rain will really encourage them. Even though we think of them springing up overnight, it takes 20 days of growth for them to complete their life cycle. Some signs and indicators that morels may be in full swing include redbuds and lilacs in bloom, may apples growing, and box turtle and snake sightings.

Jason listed the equipment that we'll need to hunt. These include a knife, mesh bag or basket (better than Wal-Mart sacks), walking stick, water, boots, rain gear, and bug spray. How to hunt? Obviously, walk Around and look on the ground. Walking a spiral pattern is a good way to proceed. If the morel feels damp and firm, it is a good sign. Cut it with a knife at the bottom. Jason suggested that we look at pictures and YouTube to fix their appearance in our minds. We should look in open areas with little sun, and always start at the bottom of a hill and work up. A favorite way of preparing morels is to sauté them in butter, but they can also be dipped in batter and deep-fried. They will last indefinitely if they're dehydrated or frozen.

Jason also brought examples of his artistic woodcarving skills—accurate morel representations from four inches to over a foot high. He also creates walking sticks with a carved morel on the end.

These cold December days will not get our morel hunting fever stirred, but now we are prepared to stalk those wild 'rooms come early spring, thanks to Jason.

Barb Robins

WILD-FLOWER OF THE MONTH

By
Emmett Sullivan

Common sunflower (*Helianthus annua*)



SPERRY-GALLIGAR Audubon Happenings

SOUTHEAST KANSAS MINEDLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT December 31, 2016

Temp 42 – 54 F; Wind 0 – 5 mph S; Lakes/streams – open; No snow cover; Sunny and clear – all day; 16 observers in five parties; 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.; Total party hours by car – 26.5, by foot – 1.75; Distance by car – 162.75, by foot – 1.25; **Total species – 60**; Individuals – 4,195; Observers – Henry Arnknecht, Mavis Benner, Ray Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy Ford, (Steve Ford, compiler, but not in field), Andy George, Collins Haynes, Joyce Haynes, Dave Henness, Lawrence Herbert, Cyndie Ivey, Delia Lister, Elizabeth Mangile, Robert Mangile, and Emmett Sullivan

Canada goose	167	Tufted titmouse	20
Mallard	8	White-breasted nuthatch	7
Northern shoveler	8	Brown creeper	3
Ducks sp.	2	Winter wren	2
Wild turkey	13	Carolina wren	19
Pied-billed grebe	9	Golden-crowned kinglet	1
Great blue heron	2	Eastern bluebird	75
Bald eagle	6	American robin	38
Northern harrier	19	Northern mockingbird	30
Sharp-shinned hawk	2	European starling	106
Red-shouldered hawk	6	Yellow-rumped warbler	7
Red-tailed hawk	93	Field sparrow	1
Buteo sp.	2	Savannah sparrow	66
Killdeer	7	Fox sparrow	4
Rock pigeon	6	Song sparrow	34
Eurasian collared dove	6	Lincoln sparrow	6
Mourning dove	28	Swamp sparrow	3
Great horned owl	1	White-throated sparrow	39
Barred owl	1	Harris sparrow	59
Red-bellied woodpecker	43	White-crowned sparrow	116
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	6	Vesper sparrow	1
Downy woodpecker	22	Sparrow sp.	150
Hairy woodpecker	3	Dark-eye junco	281
Northern flicker	30	Northern cardinal	150
American kestrel	37	Red-winged blackbird	1172
Prairie falcon	1	Meadowlark	784
Loggerhead shrike	4	Rusty blackbird	6
Blue jay	39	Common grackle	60
American crow	115	Brown-headed cowbird	14
Horned lark	28	Blackbird sp.	20
Carolina chickadee	57	House finch	26
		American goldfinch	70
		House sparrow	54

SPERRY-GALLIGAR GENERAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Barb Robins

Bird Sightings: Goldfinches, yellow-bellied sapsuckers, many Canada geese, swans.

Refreshments: Mary Kate Sullivan.

Field Trips: Delia will give a presentation on raptors at the George Washington Carver National Monument at 11:00 a.m. on January 21. The Christmas Bird Count this year will be on December 31; meet at the Scammon mini-mart at 7:00 a.m. Take the Scammon Road off Highway 69 due to the closing of Highway 7. Around January 17, the national

Audubon organization is sponsoring first-ever national counts; ours will be in the Joplin area. E-mail will be sent when we know more.

Misc: Our birdseed sale is Saturday, 9:00-5:00, in the Meadowbrook Mall. We still need volunteers for the inside table; the sign-up sheet is going around. There will be a Sperry-Galligar property cleanup (on S. College) on December 10. Please come with rakes, clippers, gloves, and help.

Sightings.....



Sperry-Galligar
Member Photos



Delia Lister



Cindy Ford

WE ARE ALWAYS
LOOKING FOR
GOOD NATURE
PHOTOS. SEND
YOUR JPG PHOTO
TO THE EDITOR.

**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
816 E. Atkinson Ave
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762



Please Print

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
Phone _____
e-mail address _____

**Events &
Miscellany**



SUCCESSFUL BIRD SEED SALE

The Annual Sperry-Galligar Audubon Bird Seed Sale, held Sunday, December 3 at the Pittsburg Meadowbrook Mall, was a great success. The day was warm, but community members were anticipating the needs of birds in their backyards. And now many birds are being treated to seed buffets during our cold weather. **Kudos to those who helped make it a success and a special thanks for Blue Ribbon Farm & Home's unwavering support and use of a trailer.**
Bob Mangile



Thanks very much to Mary Kate Sullivan for the refreshments at the Dec meeting.

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
Newsletter**
816 Atkinson Ave.
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.)
7:00 pm to 9 pm, in Room 102, Yates Hall.
PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS.
Refreshments served. 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.

