



# NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry– Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2015 - 2017

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February 2017

VOLUME 2017 ISSUE 2

## Audubon Climate Watch Program Initiated in Area

Audubon's Climate Watch is a new crowd-sourced science program that explores how North American birds are responding to climate change. In 2014, Audubon released the Audubon Birds and Climate Change report highlighting the risks that climate change poses to birds across North America. The report warns that "314 North American bird species could lose more than half of their current ranges by 2080 due to rising temperatures."

In response to this report, thousands of people asked how they could help make the world a better place for birds. National Audubon developed the Climate Watch pilot program first conducted in 2016 and expanded it in 2017 to include other Audubon

centers and chapters. Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center Education Director, Chris Pistole, coordinated the combined effort across two chapter territories in southeast Kansas and southwest Missouri. Nineteen individuals, including mainly Ozark Gateway (OGAS) and Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society (SGAS) chapter members, participated between January 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

The program includes conducting 12 stationary point counts in each of ten 10x10 km square areas by counting birds within 100 m. of each point for exactly five minutes. The intent is to visit the same 12 count points between Jan 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> each year to assess long-term changes

in their population on their winter range. There will be another count conducted in the same squares, but not necessarily the exact same 12 points, between June 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> to assess long-term changes in population on their summer range.

The pilot phase of the project is focusing on two groups of birds nationwide, bluebirds and nuthatches, but will eventually expand to include

other groups. These groups were chosen because they are easy to identify, there is a great interest in them among the public, and the computer models have strong predictions for shifts in their ranges due to climate change. While conducting our point counts participants



not only count bluebirds, but all other species that they can positively identify.

The results are sent in through individual's eBird accounts with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and a copy is sent to the Climate Watch team at National Audubon. As National Audubon gathers data from participants, they expect to refine the procedures. The results should help scientists determine whether their computer models predicting range shifts in birds due to climate change are accurate. This may help guide future efforts everywhere at protecting birds and their habitats in the face of a changing climate.

**Chris Pistole**

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

**Feb 23** — "Prairie Restoration at Carver Prairie" by Jerod Huebner - BS, Wildlife Sciences, University Missouri - Director of Prairie Management for the Missouri Prairie Foundation. He will also discuss various prairies in western Missouri and conservation efforts used to preserve them.

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

### Sperry-Galligar Members Participate in National Audubon Climate Watch Pilot.

The first count was completed during January 15-30, 2017. This will be repeated in June of 2017 and then in January and June in follow-

ing years. Specific squares were designated by National Audubon and sent to participating chapters. Sperry-Gallagher members that participated were Megan Corrigan, Wayne Bockelman, Liz Mangile and Mavis Benner. Liz and Mavis reported on the day they did their count it

was a little windy, temperature started about 29 degrees and they had a total of 18 species including a white-breasted nuthatch and six (6) eastern bluebirds. They are looking forward to the repeat count in June.

**Mavis Benner**

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

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

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

**Minutes** for 12-1-16 were read and approved.

**Treasurer's Report (Liz):** Checking account balance of \$7020.46

**Birdseed Sale:** This year's proceeds were very close to last year's. Bob requested that the next sale be moved to the second Saturday in December, and to close the sale at 4:00 instead of 5:00. We would keep the meeting date on the first Thursday on December. Approved.

**Tonight's Meeting** will be "Black Snakes and Nesting Birds" by Dr. Andrew George. Megan is working on the rest of the year, and we can look forward to prairie restoration and connecting kids to nature.

**Publicity:** Repeatedly announced on KRPS; posters were displayed in the usual places; and the Morning Sun printed Wayne's notice unedited except for the headline.

PSU's calendar included it, with a picture of nestlings.

**Newsletter:** Again, congratulations to Cindy, especially for a timely issue in spite of the holidays.

**Refreshments** tonight are by Delia Lister and Cindy Ford.

We still need a volunteer for April.

**CBC:** Steve will give a report at the general meeting. 16 people participated, 60 species were spotted, including a Vesper Sparrow.

**Field Trips:** The Stella Eagle Festival will occur this Saturday. Author George Frazier will speak on his book, *The Last Wild Places of Kansas* at the public library Sunday, January 29. Delia will do her raptor program on February 18, 11:00, at Wildcat Glades.

The **Climate Watch Pilot Program**, sponsored by National Audubon for the first time, will attempt to document movements of bluebirds and other species with the assistance of Ozark Glades Audubon chapter.

The count will occur again in June.

The **Facebook** page has been updated by Mavis. Meeting ended at 6:50 p.m.

**Financial Statement**  
**Liz Mangile, Treasurer**  
**February 2017**

**Beginning balance**----- \$7025.60

**Credits**

Local & National Dues & Ant molt-----\$ 38.00  
 Total-----\$ 38.00

**Debits**

Newsletter-----\$ 5.14  
 National Dues-----\$ 20.00  
 Total-----\$ 25.14

**Ending balance**-----\$7038.46

**January Presenter: Dr. Andrew George**

Ever since humans became aware of and interested in nature, they have raised questions about the whys and wherefores of the behavior of living things in the world around them. Attempts to answer these questions have evolved into systematic research by individuals and academic institutions all over the world.



Tonight we were fortunate to hear Dr. Andrew George, Assistant Professor of Biology at PSU, describe his method in his presentation, "Black Snakes and Nesting Birds: How Studying Snakes Can Inform Bird Conservation." Dr. George is in the process of gathering research and reaching results concerning the questions raised about neotropical migrants and reasons for their decline.

Among the questions occurring in this process include, Why are we worried about these small birds? Why are ornithologists studying snakes? What roles do habitats play? Is there a strong relationship between nest predation and forest cover? Who are the predators? Can understanding snake behavior inform bird conservation?

Dr. George described his methods for gathering data to provide answers. His study species was the black snake. His research team trapped the snakes in April, when they're active, and took them to the lab to implant radio transmitters inside their bodies, and marked their scales as identifiers. After they were released in the field, their radio signals were picked up with a receiver, and locations were mapped. Bird nests were also being monitored.

What is being learned by these activities? Dr. George's team discovered that males moved around early in the season and came back to the same places. Weather affects nest predation rates; they are higher in warmed weather and also increase with edge density.

Dr. George's study is being funded by the U.S. Forest Service and an MU Conservation Biology fellowship. After all the hard work has been done, it will be fascinating to have answers to yet another facet of discovering Nature's secrets.

**Barb Robins**

**HIGHLIGHTS OF GENERAL MEETING**

Raptor program at Wildcat Glades on Saturday, February 18, at 11:00. The Wings 'n Wetlands Festival, Great Bend, April 28-29, Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira. The Great Backyard Bird Count, February 17-20. Find information at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org).

**Barb Robins**

**NATURE PIC OF THE MONTH**

By  
**Emmett Sullivan**

Note: Already spotted on Feb. 10 by Steve Ford. Is spring early?



**Common Snipe**

## NEW AUDUBON BIRD ID APP FOR YOUR DEVICE

National Audubon has recently decided to make its birding app available for free. If you have a smart phone or a tablet and are interested in birding, I think you would love this app. It is like the best birding book you are likely to own, but it fits in your pocket. It has pictures and descriptions of probably all the birds you have ever seen. It has range maps to show you whether a bird is likely to be seen in your area. And, it has songs and calls you can listen to — try finding a bird book that includes audio!

OK, so just what is an app? *App* is short for computer application, a program that runs on your smart phone or tablet. Yes, your phone is a computer. Your smart phone can be either an iPhone from Apple or an Android phone (any other brand). Your tablet can be either an iPad or an Android tablet. Each of the icons you see on the screen of your phone or tablet is an app. If the information in this paragraph is new to you, you likely have a child, grandchild, or friend who can help you download this app — more on that later.

This is what the app includes: Over 800 species of birds are described — that covers any bird you are likely to see in North America and many that you are not. A number of birds are included as occasional visitors. There is even an entry for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

For each species there are multiple photographs: often male and female, adult and immature, perhaps another image for breeding season. Swipe to the left with a finger to bring up new images. Usually one of the images has an icon of a bird with arrows. Touch the icon to flip the image over and show the same image with field markings. Like Roger Tory Peterson's Field Guides, this image labels the field markings that distinguish this species from others that are similar.

Each bird has a long page of text description. It includes habitat, diet, behavior, and more. A map of North America shows the range of the species: winter and summer, during breeding season, where it is common or rare.

My favorite part is the “voice” page. So often a bird is heard before it is seen. For most species, multiple songs and calls are included. Finally, I can listen to the “scold” of the Carolina Wren that I hear in the backyard treetops. It is one of eleven “voices” included for the bird. And there are five different examples of “songs” — not all of which sound like *tea-kettle, tea-kettle, tea*.

This is what the app does: You can treat the app like your favorite bird book by browsing through a list of 800 birds — of course you'll have to master the finger swipe to replace the turning of a page. But browsing through 800 alphabetized bird names is not the most efficient way to find what you're looking for.

The real convenience comes in treating the app not like a book, but like an app. Type in the word “sparrow” to bring up thirty-six, thumbnail-sized images. Just a finger-touch away are descriptions, multiple images, range maps, and songs for each of

the thirty-six sparrows. Once you've found a bird that is close to the one you're looking for, there is a more powerful search. Touch the “similar” icon to bring up a group of birds that are the ones most likely confused with your first guess. More information for each of them is only a finger-touch away.

Rather than typing in my guess, I like using the “Advanced Search”. There I select a place and time, e.g. Kansas in February, and touch the arrow-shaped search button. The app has a database of all birds that are likely to be found in each state (or Canadian province) for any given month of the year. Kansas in February has 164 species. Touch the “common” heading to limit the search to the 77 birds you are most likely to see. To further limit the search more attributes can be added. Checking “hawk-like birds” under “shape” gives six results — one of them is probably the raptor I'm looking for. Other attributes that can be searched include size, color, wing-shape and habitat.

The app includes many more features. Most of them can be discovered with a little exploration. Figuring out how to use them is often easier than reading a description of them.

The app is called *Audubon Birds*. It is available at the Apple App Store for iPhones and iPads. For Android phones or tablets go to Google's Play Store. There should be an app on your device called either App Store or Play Store. You must have an account at the Store in order to download apps. Accounts at either Store are free, though Apple requires a credit card to establish an account. Once downloaded Audubon will also ask for your email address and send you occasional announcements.

The app is a large and must be downloaded in two steps. You should have a strong Wi-Fi connection. Search for *Audubon Birds* at your app Store, download the app and install it on your device. The first time the app is run it will tell you you need to download data — that's the bird pictures, maps, calls, and such. It is the data that is the big download. The app is 30 MB; the data is about 400 MB. You can choose to download only the eastern birds to save about 100 MB — birds found in the Rocky Mountains and westward will be excluded. If the data download is interrupted before it is complete, you will have to start all over. That means uninstalling the app itself and beginning fresh. I was unable to successfully download such a large file using the Wi-Fi at the Pittsburgh Public Library. Wi-Fi at PSU's Axe library worked fine. Non-students need to apply for a temporary account — a librarian can help.

Downloading the large app is worth the trouble. I love seeing the beautiful bird photographs on my tablet. Even more perhaps, I like carrying with me a wonderful Audubon bird book in my pocket on my cell phone wherever I go. I downloaded two copies of the app. Did I say it was free?

**Wayne Bockelman**

## Sightings.....



### Examples of Graphics from Audubon Bird ID App



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

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**Events &  
Miscellany**



**NEW BOOK: THE LAST WILD PLACES  
OF KANSAS**

Approximately 30 people, including several Sperry-Galligar Audubon members, recognized Kansas Day on January 29 by going to the Pittsburg Public Library for a talk by George Frazier about his book, *The Last Wild Places of Kansas*, published by University Press of Kansas. There were attendees from as far away as Wakarusa and Springfield. The audience answered Kansas trivia questions before the talk began.

George Frazier is a software architect in California who lives in Kansas. He had written about various wild places in other parts of the country, but discovered that he had an interest in "writing about my home state" and set out to find the little-known wild places in Kansas. Unfortunately, 98% of the land in Kansas is privately owned, the highest percentage of any state in the U.S., so access is sometimes limited to these places. Because of this, most Kansans are unaware of the natural areas in their own state.

George pointed out that Kansas has played a significant role in the environmental history of the United States and offers virgin prairies, old-growth forests, large wetlands and many mammals making a comeback after eradication in the state. However, over 50% of Kansans live in suburban counties, so many of them have never ventured into the wilderness.

George defines a wild place as "somewhere that nature collides with folklore," a place of biodiversity, with unusual and/or endangered wildlife and iconic landmarks. His book is an attempt to document the many wild places in the state of Kansas. He focused mainly on south-central and eastern Kansas, and he excluded the more well-known places such as Quivira, Cheyenne Bottoms and the Flint Hills.

He discussed several wild places, including Baldwin Woods, Cross Timbers, Fort Leavenworth Military Reservation and Cimarron National Grassland. He also showed photos of several locations, as well as river otters. George's talk was animated and informative, so it was well-received by all. Afterwards, he answered questions and stayed to autograph copies of his book.

**Review by Diane McCallum**

**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.

