

NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry- Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2018 - 2020

President:

Steve Ford

Vice President:

Christine Brodsky

Secretary

David Hollie

Treasurer

Liz Mangile

Newsletter Editor

Cindy Ford

cford@gus.pittstate.edu

February Meeting
Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Yates 102, PSU
Pittsburg, KS
****Presentation****

Feb 28—"Magnificent Wildlife Photos of a Master"
- Noppadol Paothong, nature photographer and an associate fellow with the International League of Conservation Photographers (iLCP). He is a staff wildlife photographer with the Missouri Department of Conservation and his images appear in the Missouri monthly publication.

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

Feb 2019

VOLUME 2019 ISSUE 2

Tarts Away By Steve Ford

The title refers to a British baking show I was watching on TV when the newsletter editor interrupted to request a little filler for the newsletter. "It should remind our members what they get when they don't contribute to the newsletter," she said. "It doesn't have to be much." Two gratifying sentiments.

So relieved of the burden of coming up with "much" I cracked my knuckles, bent over the keyboard, and prepared to write the following charmer. Actually it did give me the opportunity to ask the Audubon community to help answer a nature question that has alluded me for years, and has become a source of increasing frustration. Maybe you've wondered about it too.

First some context. Next to our driveway gate is a strip pit. The slope down to the pit is steep, brushy, thorny, and beset with the brittle lower branches of pin oak trees, not to mention the presence of a wire dog-proof fence about half-way down. There are usually a few logs floating at the edge of the water, and in nice weather there are always turtles stacked up sunning on the logs. A dozen or so is not unusual.

OK, so when I stop at the gate, as long as I don't get out of the car the stack of turtles seems content. I could be rockin' to Little Jimmy Dickens on the radio ALL afternoon and peace would prevail in the pit, but let me ever so discreetly crack the door and the entire stack is flying off the log like I'm looking to borrow money. My question is simply why? Do they honestly think I'm going to blast out of the car, flash like lightning down a slope that would have stopped the troops at Omaha Beach, and sweep them up with the ferocity of a Serena Williams backhand? (Anyone who thinks I'm lightning quick will believe I'm noodling catfish this weekend with Melania Trump). Hello, they're TURTLES! They have SHELLS! It's as if you and I - and ten friends - have sheets of half-inch plywood duct-taped to our bellies and butts on a bass boat in the middle of Table Rock Lake, and are sweating a housecat in Branson! What predator could focus on them with such efficiency that so terrifies them? Are they that delicious? (I just can't imagine a red-eared slider tasting much like a chocolate éclair, but maybe after baking in the sun for a few hours they're not bad).

It doesn't make sense to me, but then is it possible the whole predator-avoidance theory is a red herring? Maybe something else is going on. Unlike human behavior much in the natural world is about sex, so how about a scenario like this:

(Two female turtles are chatting) "Oh Betty, did you see that hunk Shelly take a half-gainer off the log Saturday when that idiot Steve stumbled out of his car?! He's ALL reptile, girlfriend, and -

Me-o my-o peppermint pie-o, what a plastron!"

So this sudden mass exodus question . . .

- (1) Showing off for the ladies?
- (2) Overreaction to a perceived threat?
- (3) Suddenly time to cool off?

Any ideas? I need help.



6:00 Board Meeting Highlights Cindy Ford for David Hollie, Secretary

Attending Jan 31: Emmett and Ruth Sullivan, Mavis Benner, Steve and Cindy Ford, Wayne Bockelmann, Bob and Liz Mangile, Delia Lister

Steve called the meeting to order.

Treasurer Report: \$4,635.65 in working account

Secretary Report: Cindy is substituting for David Hollie. She read the report and it was approved.

5K Run: Delia asked if the chapter could help with the Nature Reach sponsored 5K Run on March 30, 8:00. She needs someone in charge of the water station during the event. A sign up sheet will be given in February and a reminder in March.

Publicity: Bob sent ads to regional newspapers and radio stations about the meeting. The Pulse, a new publication in conjunction with The Morning Sun, will list events every two weeks. Mavis talked with the Visitor's Bureau manager who was interested in posting Audubon programs and field trips in the publication.

* No refreshments tonight. The board talked about going back to having one person in charge of refreshments for the year. This idea will be brought to the membership for next year.

* Delia will introduce Jenn Rader as speaker at tonight's meeting.

Old Business: Steve has extra copies of the Christmas Bird Count. Many eagles were spotted this year. The McCune Farm to Market was a good place to meet.

*Steve outlined the history of Sally Imhof's request for funds to build a rehab flight pen. He will share Sally's letter with the board and will ask Sally to present her proposal to the board at the February meeting.

*Parents/Kids Day: Mary Kilcher's proposal for this event is tabled.

New Business: Bob proposed having Chicken Mary's cater the May picnic for our 20th Anniversary. We could buy a sheet cake for dessert.

*Bob sent some chapter pictures to Audubon of Kansas.

*We need more bluebird houses to give to speakers or maybe 20# of bird seed.

Meeting adjourned.

Financial Statement...Liz Mangile, Treasurer February 2019

Beginning balance-----	\$4291.87
Credit	
National Audubon yearly deposit-----	\$447.75
Total-----	\$ 447.75
Debit	
Newsletter-----	\$ 3.97
Money box for feed sale-----	\$100.00
Total-----	\$ 103.97
Ending balance-----	\$4635.65

January Presenter: Jenn Rader



Jenn Rader, Director of the Schermerhorn Nature Center in Galena, KS, described her experiences as an instructor for a summer camp for high school students. The Sternberg Museum with Hays State University, KS sponsors several camps, one of which is a natural history trip to the Southwest U.S.

Jenn traveled to New Mexico and Arizona with the group, staying the first night in Tucumcari, NM. This area is short grass prairie so the fauna reflected that habitat. Some species found included lark sparrows, Couch's spadefoot toad, New Mexico thread snake, Texas horned lizard, wind scorpion, and Yuma myotis.

Next stop was White Sands National Monument outside Alamogordo, NM. This area is noted for acres of sand dunes—the largest deposit of gypsum sands in the world. Amazingly, gypsum sand does not hold heat so it is comfortable to walk on the sand dunes even in the summer. Many of the animals in this area are adapted to the color of the sand so there are white morphs of fence lizards, earless lizards, and whiptails. There are even white walking sticks.

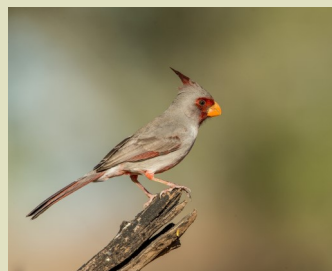
The group spent several days in the Chiricahua Mountains in Arizona, which is a prime example of a desert sky island. In other words, the mountain habitats are isolated from other similar mountain habitats by "seas" of desert. Zones of vegetation occur at different elevations on the mountains: coniferous, deciduous, and high desert. Some of the animals discovered there were Arizona alligator lizard, desert king snake, Arizona white-tailed deer, blue-throated hummingbird, elegant Trogon, acorn woodpecker, Gambel's quail, canyon wren, nectar feeding long-tongued bat, four species of skunks, and more. The area is quite diverse.

Next was the Gila River Nature Conservancy, set aside as a Chihuahuan riparian habitat for the rare willow flycatcher and the western woodpecker. Birds of note here were a zone-tailed hawk, phainopepla, pyrruloxia, a calliope hummingbird, and a common black hawk. About 30 species of bats were found by mist netting in this habitat.

Before heading home, the group explored the Gila National Forest, composed of forests and savannas and an interesting area called Valley of Fires. The Malpais lava flow here is visible in the cracks in the ground with Chihuahuan vegetation predominant on top. Black morphs of fence lizards can be found here.

Cindy Ford

pyrruloxia



phainopepla



HAPPENINGS IN SOUTHEAST KANSAS

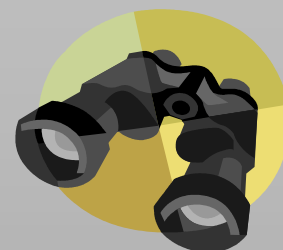
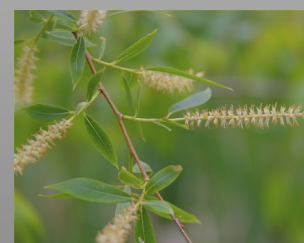


Emmett Sullivan

Emmett's Pics

This is **bur cucumber**, (*Sicyos angulatus*) Cucumber family. It provides cover for upland gamebirds and songbirds. found in N.W. Cherokee Co. KS. They bloom in September.

Sightings.....

Early Tree Flowering
in SE Kansas

Black willow — one of the earliest native trees to bloom



Maples — depending on which maple, flowers come early



PSU NATURE REACH SUMMER PROGRAMS

Pre-K Summer Program 2019

Wednesday, June 12

Wednesday, June 19

Wednesday, July 24

Wednesday, July 31

\$5.00 / Session

15 student maximum

3 to 5-year olds

9:00 or 10:00 sessions

PSU Campus, Heckert-Wells 329

Each week we will read a story and feature an animal or group of animals as part of the story.

Register online at www.pittstate.edu/departments/naturereach/

Nature Reach Summer Day Camp 2019

\$70

June 24 to 28; 9:00 to 12:00 each day

Students who have completed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade

15 student maximum

PSU Natural History Reserve

(1053 S. 180th, Pittsburg, KS 66762)

Students receive hands-on learning, outside play, daily snacks, interaction with live animals, and much more. Parent Open House: June 28th at 11:30.

Contact: **Delia Lister**, Director of Nature Reach (620) 235-4727
Or e-mail: dlister@pittstate.edu

Registration Deadline: **April 30** (but we fill quickly.)

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



Field Trip Proposed for Woodcock Viewing

It is woodcock display season coming up. They are fun to watch as they display in the air calling as they do. However, the display sites and timing can be elusive.

We are planning an evening fieldtrip at the Ford Farm to try to get a look at the display. We will have coffee and dessert. Bring a lawn chair. Steve Ford will confirm the fieldtrip plans at the next general meeting. Also, watch for updated information on our website.



**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.

