



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

Sep 2020 / Issue 1

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Program Details

No programs are scheduled for fall due to coronavirus pandemic. Spring programs pending.

AUDUBON OUTLOOK: FALL & WINTER

Greetings, Friends.

The Chapter Board wants to share the results of its discussions regarding fall and winter activities for Audubon. We trust you know the arguments.

General Meetings

There will be no general meetings nor field trips this fall and through the holidays.

Bird Seed Sale

The traditional bird seed sale at the mall is canceled. Bob is negotiating with our supplier, Blue Ribbon, for a somewhat different format. We will have news by Thanksgiving so check the late November newsletter.

Mined Land Christmas Bird Count

Andy George is the new compiler. He will be forwarding count details.

Chapter Dues

Canceled for a year. That is, for members whose chapter dues are paid up your expiration date will be extended one year. This policy does not extend to those paying dues to the National Audubon Society.

Spring Activities

The last we have heard, epidemiologists are hoping for an available vaccine by the end of the first quarter of 2021--March. Therefore we are not optimistic about an active spring season--general meetings, Earth Day, picnic. At this time we will have to take a wait-and-see attitude and make a decision around the first of the year.

NEXT NEWSLETTER--THANKSGIVING.

Articles due November 20.

A Word

The Crud. Of course we will get past it. Fall is nigh, and the birds are as beautiful as ever. Get out and go birding where you have not been for awhile. Go on now, go. Be well.

Board Minutes

No minutes to report.

Audubon Meeting Program

No speakers scheduled for fall...pending for spring.

Treasurer Report

Will report in future newsletter.

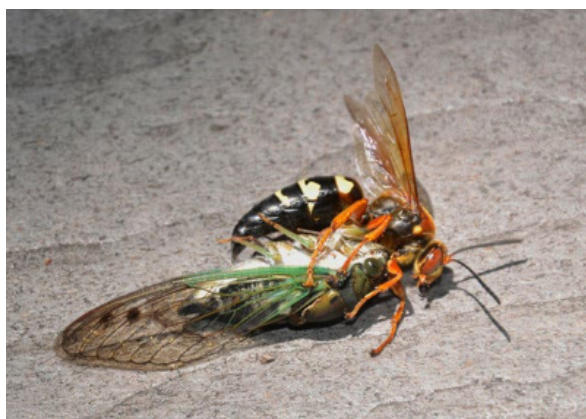
CRITTER CONNECTIONS by Bob Mangile

Cicadas

During the warm months of the year the solitary Cicada Killer, Sphecius speciosus, a large 1-1/2 inch long wasp, is often seen flying low to the ground hunting for Cicadas. Females paralyze their prey with a sting (males do not have a stinger) and haul it back to a two foot long underground burrow that might contain up to a dozen paralyzed Cicadas. She lays an egg on the paralyzed Cicada that hatches in a couple of days and the larva dine on the Cicada. The larvae mature in a couple of weeks, spin a cocoon and rest through the winter. After few weeks of spring pupation they emerge as adults completing the cycle. Males die after mating; females die after nesting is completed – adults do not overwinter. Adults feed on nectar and plant sap. They pose no danger to humans - the female's sting it is said to be less painful than other wasps. (I'll take them at their word!)

Getting airborne directly from the ground with a paralyzed Cicada twice the female's weight is almost impossible. They need to start from an elevated position for a successful flight as depicted in the accompanying photo.

Forty years ago I watched a Cicada Killer wasp dragging a paralyzed Cicada across our gravel drive and three or four feet up the trunk of the large American Elm at the edge of our property. It then sprang into the air with the Cicada, losing elevation at first and then leveling out above the grass but unfortunately it hit a short weed about 40 feet out and fell to the ground. It then dragged the Cicada all the way back and up the tree for another attempt. But this time had success as it dipped down low over the lawn and gradually gained elevation and flew away with its payload. # # #





Happenings in Southeast KS

Mid-Summer Discoveries

The coronavirus has turned our lives upside-down this year, with consequences for everyone. My father and aunt have been mostly stuck inside (one in Nebraska, one in Colorado). Both are travelers at heart, so that has been very hard for them. In an effort to help, I've made weekly trips to Wilderness Park in Frontenac so I can take photographs and share them via email. As a result, I've learned a few things!

First of all, I don't think I've ever been in the park during the height of summer, due to my susceptibility to humidity (in other words, my wimpiness), so I was surprised how much there is to be seen there during this time. There are all sorts of wildflowers, birds filling the trees (most of them annoyingly invisible due to the thick leaves), fauna of all kinds (turtles, frogs, etc.) ... and a rather remarkable assortment of insects. I will admit that in the past, I was more likely to shoo the bugs away than to inspect them, but I was getting desperate to find something new to photograph. I can only take so many leaf/log/flower photos, after all!

One early experience for me was noticing an iridescent green bug on the path. He seemed unperturbed by me as I snapped a few photos. When I sent a photo to my dad, he replied with concern that it might be an ash borer, so I did some research online. Thank goodness for Google! I was able to find out that no, it wasn't an ash borer (whew). It was instead a Six-spotted Tiger Beetle. Cool!

Next, I noticed several small fluttering insects that I at first assumed were dragonflies. Upon checking it out, however, I discovered that they were damselflies. It turns out that to tell the difference between a damselfly and a dragonfly, you should look at its wings while it's resting. If the wings are tucked together over the insect's back, it's a damselfly; if they are spread out perpendicularly from the insect's body, it's a dragonfly. Again: cool!

I saw several damselflies, including the most amazing one with a magical name: Ebony Jewelwing. The insect lives up to its name, too: the male has an iridescent blue body with black wings, making a very striking image fluttering among the leaves. (I was unable to photograph the male, alas, but I did capture a photo of a female.)

After a while, I noticed that the damselflies liked to hang out in sunny areas, so I made my way to a sunny trail on the western edge of the park. Oh, my! I had found Dragonfly Central! There were dragonflies fluttering and zooming all around me! That was amazing. I took several photos and then spent days—days!—trying to identify them. I'm still working on that. (I've seen several new butterflies, too.)

So I guess I have to thank the coronavirus for forcing me outside, even in this horrible weather (it's early July as I write this), to witness the mid-summer miracles on display at Wilderness Park. I can highly recommend the experience ... but let's hope that next year, it doesn't take a pandemic to get me out there again.

Diane McCallum

See Diane's photos on the Bonus Page (last page).

Sightings...



**PHOTOGRAPHER
Emmett Sullivan**
submitted this
photo and
description.

**This plant stands
around six feet
tall or more in wet
soils. It can start
blooming in July
when the
butterflies start
coming to
pollinate them.**



Cup plant

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 _____

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e-mail address _____

Misc & Events

You will notice a new format for the newsletter.

This is due to a change in my computer which does not support my previous archaic publisher program.

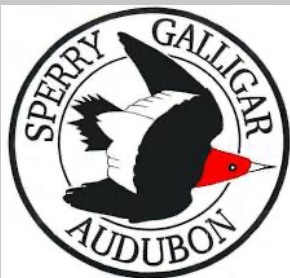
Times change.

Native Plant Sale

Shoal Creek Conservation Center

Joplin, MO

Saturday, Sept. 19



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.

BONUS PAGE

Dragonflies and Damselflies

Photos by Diane McCallum

Refer to article on page 3.

Dragonflies



Female common whitetail



Female great blue skimmer



Male Eastern pondhawk

Damselflies



Female ebony jewelwing



Bluet damselfly



Orange bluet