



# NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

Oct 2021/ Issue 2

## OFFICERS

### President

Steve Ford

### Vice President

Mary Jo Meier

### Secretary

Megan Corrigan

### Treasurer

Liz Mangile

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## Board Support

### Newsletter Editor

Cindy Ford

[cford@gus.pittstate.edu](mailto:cford@gus.pittstate.edu)

### Web Master

Bob Mangile

[sperry-galligar.com](http://sperry-galligar.com)

### Membership

Dianne McCallum

## Next Program

**Thursday,  
October 28**

102 Yates Hall,  
Pittsburg State  
University  
7:00 p.m.  
Mask required

"High Class  
Honey Bees and  
Rattlesnakes"  
by Norbert Neal

*Please join us for the next Sperry-Galligar Audubon meeting.  
There is a great program planned and many more to come.*

## RECOMMENDED NEW BOOK

What It's Like to be a Bird by David Allen Sibley. Like many folks, my reading picked up during the pandemic and I wanted to share this title with S-G Auduboners. I found it delightful. Sibley has been a mainstay in various birding (and tree) field guides for many years. His latest (2020) is not a field guide, but a large format compendium of all kinds of bird facts--ecological and behavioral mostly--but also anatomical, natural history, etc. The book makes no pretense to being encyclopedic, although the first 24 pages are rather thin, albeit in a dense bullet format. The meat is information Sibley finds particularly fun and interesting in a loosely taxonomic scheme starting with Canada geese and ending with blackbirds. I kept finding myself calling to Cindy: "Hey, did you know that....?" until she started closing doors on me. It is heavily illustrated with Sibley's wonderfully rich, bold, creative watercolor paintings. (I want to frame some of them.) It can be read steadily with a cup of coffee or picked up off the coffee table for a page or two at a time and would make a great gift for a naturalist friend or someone just entering the birding world. It is hardback, 8 1/2" x 11", with some 225 pages. A tad pricey at \$35, but for the visual impact and solid, interesting, highly readable information, I think it is a good value.

**Steve Ford**



## Emmett's Pics

**Button Bush--Madder Family**  
They grow in wet areas next to some of the strip pits here in NW Cherokee Co. They attract butterflies. There is a narrow-leaf cat-tail next to it. This photo was taken on July 2, 2021.

## Board Minutes

The Sperry-Galligar Audubon Board Meeting was held September 30, 2021. In attendance were Bob and Liz Mangile, Mavis Benner, Mary Jo Meier, Steve and Cindy Ford, Delia Lister, Dianne McCallum, Wayne Bockelman, and Megan Corrigan.

Treasurer's Report – We have \$4779.67 in the checking account

Plans were confirmed for a field trip to PSU's Natural History Reserve on October 2 for a tour of new raptor facilities, bird walk, and a chili lunch.

Sally Imhof invites SGAS members to see the flight cage funded by SGAS. Her facility is north of Arma and a spring field trip will be planned to include a visit to her facility.

Board members plan to make more Bluebird houses in November. The Birdseed Sale will likely again be at Blue Ribbon, but the bluebird houses will be available for purchase at SGAS meetings.

Board Meetings for the near future will continue to be held in Yates 102, starting at 6:00 pm, prior to public meetings. Anyone interested in serving on the board is welcome to join.

The next meeting will be October 28 - Norbert Neal, beekeeper – Honeybees and Rattlesnakes

Submitted by **Megan Corrigan, Secretary**

## Treasurer Report

October 2021

Beginning Balance-----\$ 5010.40

### **Credits**

Memberships-----\$ 270.00

National Audubon deposit-----\$ 447.75

### **Debits**

Stamps-----\$ 33.00

Newsletters-----\$ 20.49

Donation to Millford Nature Center-----\$ 500.00

Donation to KRPS-----\$ 200.00

Chilli Supper-----\$ 73.44

Ending Balance-----\$ 4901.26

## Past Audubon Meeting Program



### **Delia Lister**

presented "New Advances at Nature Reach – Handling an Outreach Program during a Pandemic". We've heard

from Delia before, and we know Nature Reach takes live animals to local schools and hosts groups to teach kids about nature. So, knowing that, and knowing that all the schools suddenly closed their doors, you can be forgiven for thinking that Delia could catch her breath, kick back and relax for a while. Her student animal caretaker staff abruptly went from about seven students down to one. The break from live programming offered an opportunity to undertake projects that had previously not made it to the top of the to-do list. She needed to pivot. She and one student continued to feed the animals on schedule, the Animal Caretaking class was online, and she participated in a virtual Wild Wednesdays event so she could still reach kids. With a grant from Evergy, she spent the spring putting together camp-in-a-box kits that she delivered to campers zooming at home. She wrote an online Camp Manual for the kids and their parents. The camp was a success.

Also in spring, 2020, the Surface Mining Unit of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment completed a \$250,000 project, developing a wetland, small prairie, and boardwalk.

Nature Reach cages needed an upgrade. After attending a training offered by the Raptor Center of the University of Minnesota, she learned about best practices in care of captive raptors, that new federal standards are in the works, and that some of the Nature Reach facilities would not meet the expected new standards. With help from Evergy, students, and community members, Delia built cages to appropriate sizes and replaced the mesh with nylon coated welded wire. With a grant from the PSU Student Government, she installed infrared video cameras in the cages to monitor activity of the birds.

(Cont. on next page)



## Happenings in Southeast KS

(Cont. from previous page: "Nature Reach in Pandemic")

PSU computer programmers assisted Delia in designing an app that her student animal caretakers can use to log their feeding. So, in the course of two years, Nature Reach has gone high tech to better care for the animals.

While Delia was excited about all the physical improvements, it was her own professional development experiences during the pandemic that seemed most meaningful to her. She learned more about how to train raptors using positive reinforcement in the least intrusive manner. She learned how to set up their environment so that they can do what she needs them to do, things like standing on a scale to be weighed, walking into a pet carrier, or standing on her gloved arm for a program without her forcing or stressing the bird. This is time consuming training for an animal, requiring patience and detailed observation on the part of the trainer. But Delia can already see a difference in how the Nature Reach birds behave and a reduction in their stress levels. All in all, more innovation has happened at Nature Reach these past two years than usual. But things are settling in with a new normal.

**Megan Corrigan**

## New Kansas State Park: Little Jerusalem

If you have a chance to visit western Kansas, it is worth your while to make a detour south of Oakley, KS on I-70 to visit a Kansas state park that was developed about two years ago. The landscape is dramatic in that limestone (chalk) formations give a "badlands" appearance--in contrast to the flat native grass plains surrounding the area. Approximately seven miles to the east of the state park is a popular site called Monument Rocks. The monoliths are large and look totally out of place. When we were there at sunset, it reminded me of Stone Henge. Visitors were taking photos from all angles. Thanks to Wayne and Megan for suggesting that we stop for a visit.

**Cindy Ford**



## Sightings...



### REDS OF FALL



Gray Dogwood



Virginia creeper



Staghorn sumac

Send your newsletter articles, bird sightings, and nature notes to C. Ford by Nov. 10.

[cford@gus.pittstate.edu](mailto:cford@gus.pittstate.edu)



## 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 renewal membership, send \$15.00 for membership in 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.

Please print and mail to:

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society**  
816 E. Atkinson Ave.  
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month...7:00 p.m. to 9 p.m., Room 102, Yates Hall, PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS.

No meetings in June, July, or August. (November/December meeting date to be announced.)

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society  
816 E. Atkinson Ave.  
Pittsburg, KS 66762

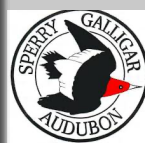
## Events & Etc.

### Bird Seed Sale

Bob Mangile talked with Blue Ribbon about our bird seed sale in their store. We encourage you to purchase your winter supply of bird seed during the sale days-- December 3 & 4.

### DUES

Please pay your membership dues for this year. Send a check to the address at the left or see Liz Mangile at the next meeting. Your dues help the chapter get funding from National Audubon.



**ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS.** Pay membership dues in September. Please consider paying local membership dues. Our chapter receives 100% of the local dues only. You can subscribe to both local and national. Either way you get the newsletter.

## Notes From the Back Yard by Megan Corrigan

About 10 years ago, Wayne and I planted pipevine on a fence in our yard. We did it because it is the host plant of pipe vine swallowtail butterflies, though honestly neither one of us knew or had seen them, but it sounded interesting to have a host plant, and it's native.

The first summer I found three big caterpillars chewing the leaves, but I never saw any butterflies, and in the years since, I have never even seen any caterpillars. I also almost never see flowers on the vine. We planted it in the shade, and I thought maybe that was the problem – maybe it prefers sun, won't flower, won't attract butterflies to lay eggs, and that will be all. The plant has done great, in fact it spreads and constantly tries to take down the tree that's casting the shade, so we are always pulling up the spreaders, but up to this year it has been disappointing on the butterfly front.

Since we had so many monarch caterpillars this year, I checked the pipe vine, too, all summer. Nothing, nothing, nothing, then in August, at least 12 big, fat, black and orange spiky hairless caterpillars! When the yard was quiet enough, we could hear them chewing! Hooray! Out of curiosity, I brought 3 inside. Eventually they pupated, but one was dark brown and two were bright green, so I doubted they would all make it. They looked more like folded leaves than chrysalises, though this was a physical transformation of the caterpillar, the exoskeletons actually looked like leaves. This was not leaf fragments adhered to them. Such perfect camouflage! One went to the top of the jar and the other two pupated at the bottom of the jar, so I took off those lids. They didn't exactly hang down, they hung more parallel to whatever they attached to, one was settled on the bottom of the jar. This was nothing like the monarchs that needed to hang just right, undisturbed, and then have a place to hang for an hour or so after they emerge. Two of our pupae were right at the bottom of the jar, so how could they hang? I kept thinking the brown one would probably die, since the other two were bright green.

Finally one morning I looked at one and said to Wayne "Look, it looks really pretty bad, I think it's dead." It definitely looked dead, kind of darker, dried out. Sad. Depressing. But a few monarchs had never emerged, so it seemed possible it had died. But surprise! When I picked up the jar to clean it out, behind it was a butterfly there among our clutter! The chrysalis looked dead because the butterfly had emerged! All three of them eventually emerged, and all three times we missed the moment, so I have no idea if they have to hang to pump up their wings. I guess they made it work. And now we know what they look like!

I worried maybe if they had stayed outside they would overwinter as chrysalises, and having them hatch so late in the year might not be natural, since these butterflies don't fly south like monarchs, but we saw a few others in the yard that must have emerged in September. One website says the butterflies only live a few weeks, so I guess that gives them time to find a mate and lay more eggs. Then maybe those chrysalises will overwinter. Maybe we will have some, overwintering in our back yard. If we do, I am pretty sure that with their camouflage I will never find them.

For way better photos than mine and a bit more info on the life cycle, see <https://www.vox.com/2016/7/6/12098122/california-pipevine-swallowtail-butterfly-population>



## TIME OUT: COLORADO by Cindy Ford

This summer has been hot and humid, which is not a surprise to all of us living in southeast Kansas. So...Steve and I were looking forward to spending a week in the Rockies west of Denver where the climate was starting to merge into late fall. We have been in the Rockies before, but this year we noticed more than previous trips that we had left home at about 400 ft. above sea level and increased in elevation to over 7,000 ft. above sea level. Symptoms of “altitude sickness” happen right away—mild headaches, sleepiness and we were out of breath just moving to the fridge. We started drinking more water and slowing down. (Maybe this is good for a vacation, but we wanted to do all we could to experience the area.). We had envisioned hiking on rugged trails in the mountains, but on our last day in Evergreen we were acclimating enough to take our first hike. (Actually, it was a “bird walk” on fairly level ground!)

Other people on the trail were walking dogs, jogging, riding mountain bikes, and generally moving at a good clip. We were stopping and starting to catch the sound of bird, spot some movement in the branches of the pines, or determine whether this bird was the same species as those found in Kansas. Many of the small birds were similar looking. The mountain chickadee has a white stripe on the head compared to our Carolina chickadee. The pygmy nuthatch is smaller and rounder with a light-colored underside. Gray-headed juncos are a different race with primarily gray bodies and a large rust patch on the back. Steller’s jays flash a deep blue with a dark head in contrast with our blue jay. The most striking birds we saw are common in forests as well as around housing: black-billed magpies. They are beautiful and intelligent birds in the crow family and probably are regarded as nuisances to people living in the area. They are bold and noisy. Ravens occur in the area as well as crows. Other birds we spotted are the same species that we find here: white-breasted nuthatches, red-breasted nuthatches, hairy woodpeckers, downy woodpeckers. The occurrence of species of birds in the area and overall numbers are much lower than we see here.

Not surprisingly, the diversity of plants too is lower due to high elevation, climate, location, and precipitation than we see in Kansas. The area is beautiful with tall lodgepole pines, ponderosa pines, blue spruces, Douglas firs, quaking aspens, cottonwoods, and alders, surrounding meadows of grasses. The golden colors of the cottonwoods and quaking aspens contrast brilliantly with the dark conifers. We were fortunate to have a dusting of snow one afternoon which highlighted the mountain peaks.

We were getting in the mood for crisp temperatures, putting on layers of clothes, and settling in by the fireplace. However, rolling back across the Kansas plains, we came to the reality that we are early into fall here in southeast Kansas with plenty of warm, humid days left before sitting in front of the fireplace. (By the way, we are back to drinking normal amounts of water and we are not winded going to the refrigerator.)



Mountain chickadee



Gray headed junco

Black-billed magpie



Pygmy nuthatch



Steller's jay