



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

Nov/Dec 2023 / Issue3

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Bob Mangile
sperry-galligar.com

Membership
Diane McCallum

Next Program

Thursday, 7:00
December 7
Yates Hall 102
PSU Campus

"Fighting Wildfires"
by Meagan Duffee-
Yates, Missouri
Department of
Conservation.
Meagan will
highlight part of her
job that centers
around quelling out
of control fires.

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

WE WILL MEET THE FIRST THURSDAY OF
DECEMBER.

SPERRY-GALLIGAR AUDUBON BIRDSEED SALE

Dane and Linda Shultz, owners of the Blue Ribbon Farm & Home Store, 1103 E 4th St., Pittsburg, KS are providing black oil sunflower seed, wild bird seed and niger (thistle) during a special sales event: **Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, Dec 9, 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m..** Fifteen percent (15%) of the proceeds from all the birdseed sales those days will go to the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter. Please thank the Shultz's for their support.



What a great time to stock up on your bird seed for the winter...and...some for friends and family! (Hint: Blue Ribbon also has suet cakes and feeders that make dandy gifts.)

JOIN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT on
New Years Day. See details on page 6.

Board Minutes...Mary Jo Meier

October 26th at 6 p.m., third floor of Heckert-Wells at PSU.

Attending were Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Steve Ford, Cindy Ford, Kathy Fox, Andrew George, Diane McCullum, Bob Mangile, Liz Mangile, Mary Jo Meier

The minutes of the September meeting were read by Megan Corrigan and approved.

Liz Mangile gave the Treasurer's report:
\$4,968.06 – Checking balance (\$250.00 memorial gift received for Lucy Bednekoff included)
CDs were moved from Teachers Credit Union to Commerce Bank (5.25%)
\$250.00 – memorial gift for Lucy Bednekoff

The PSU Wildlife Society Kansas Chapter celebrated their 50th Anniversary at a meeting in Emporia. Birdhouses from Sperry-Galligar Audubon were given as prizes by Dr. Christine Brodsky and Khloey Stringer.

Bird Walks: The next Bird Walk will be held at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 11 at Bone Creek Lake. Please use the southeast entrance by 200th Street. December Bird Walk location TBD. There may be an Owl Prowl at Shawnee Trails on Saturday, Dec. 2.

Bob Mangile has arranged for Sperry-Galligar Audubon to partner with Blue Ribbon Farms for the 2023 Birdseed Sale. The sale will be held on December 8th and 9th. We can remind our members at our December 7th meeting.

Upcoming programs include:

Thursday, December 7, 2023 – Meagan Duffee-Yates, Private Land Conservationist II at Missouri Dept. of Conservation – Topic: "Fighting Wildfires"

Thursday, January 25, 2024 – Kyle Steinert, Assistant Manager of the Farlington Fish Hatchery and Kansas Aquatic Biodiversity Center – Topic: "Freshwater Mussels and Plains Minnows" Restoration of the Fish Hatchery and Aquatic Center

Thursday, February 29, 2024 – Jeff Cantrell – Conservation Educator, Missouri Dept. of Conservation – Topic: "Ozark Chinquapin"

Thursday, March 28, 2024 – Sally Imhoff – Topic: "Animal Rehab- Leave Them Alone".



Treasurer Report...Liz Mangile

November 2023

Beginning Balance.....\$5583.64

Credits

Dues, Gift.....\$ 370.00

Debits

Audubon of Kansas.....\$1000.00

KRPS..... 200.00

Homer Cole for Picnic..... 80.00

Total.....\$1280.00

Ending Balance.....\$4673.64

Happy Thanksgiving



(cont.)

Thursday, April 25, 2024 - Max and Eweleen Good – Topic: "Prairie Wildflowers"

Thursday, May 30, 2024 – Annual Picnic – Homer Cole Center

Bob Mangile has reserved the Homer Cole Center for the May picnic on, Thursday, May 30th. Kathy Fox is working on archiving our historic files and will prepare a slide show for the picnic if possible.

Mavis suggested we reach out to the Boy Scouts and 4-H groups to increase our membership and advertise and have a display at the Pittsburg Public Library.

Andy George discussed a new course on campus regarding a hunter's education course, duck hunt and a meal.

Meeting was adjourned.

October PROGRAM Synopsis

A YEAR OF BIRDS



Bob Estes shared several dozen of his bird photos for the October program. They were terrific. Bob has the aesthetic eye, technical expertise, fine equipment, patience, and dedication of a wonderful wildlife photographer, and the results were on full display. He's in the field at dawn nearly every day, returning home to sort through hundreds of the day's pictures. He uses no photoshop-type manipulations. His shots run the gamut - from hummingbirds to swans and eagles, from kaleidoscopic action to serene portraits.

Bob underlined his presentation with thoughtful narrative of how he went about capturing his shots, including taking inspiration from how he imagines Helen Keller might approach the observation of nature had she but a few hours of sight.

What a pleasure was his program. We were sorry to see it end.

Steve Ford



MANGILE CRITTER CONNECTIONS: Milkweed Tussock Moth and Larvae

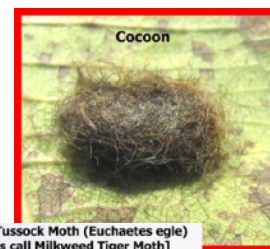
In August, 2022, it was a mostly uneventful summer on my place...too much spring water and too much summer heat! It seemed everything was off in 2022, including the lack of Monarch butterfly larvae on my two patches of common milkweed. I had only observed one Monarch larva on my milkweed plants that year! So, it was a surprise to see several of my plants badly damaged by something. Closer inspection discovered the culprits: Milkweed tussock moth larvae and many of them.

We have learned that milkweed plants possess a white, sticky latex-like sap and a toxin called "cardiac glycosides". Monarch larvae are not affected by the toxin and retain it through metamorphosis into adult butterflies. Birds learn not to eat the butterflies because the toxin makes them sick.

Now I have learned that the Milkweed tussock moth (*Euchaetes egle*) larvae thrive on milkweed plants too and without any effect from the toxin. But, unlike Monarch larvae, these critters occur in large numbers and completely gobble up milkweed at an

astonishing rate—almost overnight. They are beautiful looking caterpillars about 1-1/2 inches long and easily spotted on the plants. So I removed many of them but saved a few in a jar and fed them milkweed leaves until they pupated into little dark fuzzy half-inch long cocoons that I saved in a jar hoping to see one emerge. To my surprise it happened but it died before I could get a photo. So, maybe it wasn't such an uneventful summer after all!

Bob Mangile



Milkweed Tussock Moth (*Euchaetes egle*)
[Sometimes call Milkweed Tiger Moth]





Happenings in Southeast KS

Careful What You Wish For

Steve Ford

Recently I was excavating a remote closet and from one of the deeper strata retrieved a record album purchased in 1983. It's by a Hoosier folk singer named Dillon Bustin. One of his songs, "In My Barnyard," follows a beleaguered young farmer who is at constant war with wild animals. He sings . . .

"You ask me what's a dirty trick
Skinny old weasel in among the chicks,
And when he's done gnawing their legs
An old skunk come and he'll suck the eggs."

...

"Down in the cornfield see the deer
Each one chewing on a yellow ear."

...

"All the milk my milk cow makes
Gets drunk up by a long milk snake."

We're not farmers, but years ago we moved to the country to commune with nature. Now we're up to our - - - in it and the river's still risin'. We're soul mates with Mr. Bustin . . .

— The other day we discovered our air-conditioning unit was tilting because a woodchuck had burrowed under it. The woodchuck moved on, but subsequently a packrat family moved in, filling the old burrow with two bushels of sticks, leaves, bones, and a partial deer antler. It took two days to rectify that team effort.

— When we first got our place we thought the beavers were charming. They're not. There's a reason their levees are called "damns" (or at least that's what we call them). Deconstructing even a small cut in them is hard, sweaty work. Plenty of work, and then they fill them in overnight. I get the impression they take pleasure in it. They also don't mind ringing the bark off giant oaks that began life during Grover Cleveland's administration. Our only practical recourse has been to wrap any valued tree with fencing. We've wrapped hundreds. Prior to beavers we had religion.

— As Bustin sings, we've had our share of egg-sucking opossums and snakes and hen-munching foxes. Our watchdogs are too busy at night barking at coyotes and the neighbors' dogs through the fence to watch the coop. The coyotes bark back, so with all the competitive barking, yipping, growling and howling we have to turn up the volume of the TV if we want to hear Judge Judy.

— Fox squirrels, rabbits, cotton rats, and occasionally even deer fatten on Cindy's garden in broad daylight, unmolested by the dogs, which is reasonable I suppose. I mean they have to catch up on sleeping from exhaustive nights of canine debates.

— Those cute little white-footed mice find the tomatoes and young pepper plants in Cindy's greenhouse to their liking, and also favor the tangy flavor of rubber hoses and wires in the pick-up truck, car, and tractor. Plus their engines provide enviable nesting sites for the Mrs.

— I used to be irritated at all the flickers flocking to peck on the house. My clapping and yelling from the windows eventually fell on deaf ears, so I put up strips of shiny mylar bunting to discourage them. The place looks quite gay when the wind blows. In time I realized the birds were going after mud dauber nests, but decided to leave the streamers anyway. We grew fond of the "House For Sale" look.

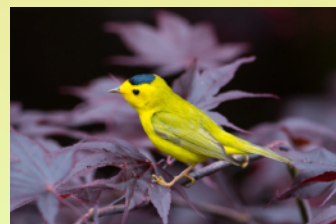
While the further shenanigans of the deer, raccoons, armadillos, moles, and the freckle-nipping sunfish call for documentation, I'm starting to feel sorry for myself, so better quit. Maybe I'll write a song.



Sightings...



National Public Radio reported a movement to change common names of many birds to descriptions instead of names, e.g. Wilson's warbler to some other name. What do you think about this?



Send articles to C. Ford, Newsletter Editor.
Deadline: January 10

Audubon Artistic Notebook



**Photos by Emmett Sullivan,
West Mineral, KS**

American Bald Eagle

Recognizable as our United States symbol, the bird is commonly spotted this time of year. Join the Christmas Bird Count and you will likely be rewarded with a view of one.

Kathy Fox takes photos at her country property near Pittsburg.



Goatweed Leafwing



American Goldfinch



Frost Flower

When temperatures drop in the fall, white crownbeard splits its stem, releasing sap near the ground forming these curls. They are short-lived—melting the next day.

**Application for Membership
Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society**

For first-time National Audubon membership: send \$20.00 and become a member of both organizations, receive 4 copies of Audubon Magazine annually and 8 copies of Sperry-Galligar Newsletter. Please make your check to: National Audubon Society.

_____ 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 Audubon Society.

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 _____



SEND ALL CHECKS TO SPERRY-GALLIGAR AUDUBON

Local DUES: \$15

Mail your check or find Liz Mangile at the next meeting to continue your membership.

EVENTS/ETC.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

New Years Day, January 1

Meet at Farm to Market in McCune, 7:00 a.m. to get your birdwatching location.

Contact Andy George for details:

adgeorge@pittstate.edu

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

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.