



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

April 2025 / Issue 7

OFFICERS

President
Andrew George
Vice President
Megan Corrigan
Secretary
Steve Ford
Treasurer
Liz Mangile

BOARD SUPPORT

Newsletter Editor
Cindy Ford
cford@pittstate.edu

Web Master
Bob Mangile
sperry-galligar.com

Membership
Diane McCallum
dmccallum11@cox.net

Next Program

Thursday, 7:00

April 24

Yates 102

Pittsburg State Univ

"Purple Martins of the Amazon" by Bill Warnes. Purple martins, migrating from the Amazon, depend on structures for nesting here in North America. Bill will share best practices on martin housing and relay recent information on migration routes.

Trees Fall Down

Steve Ford

From pipes to pavers clay has helped fuel Pittsburg's prosperity. Cindy's garden is hardscaped with historical imprints from PITTSBURG VP&B BRICK CO and several other plants. Shortly after we came to town in 1985 we purchased a handsome pot from the old Pittsburg Pottery Company on north Broadway (north of Tractor Supply), now some three decades defunct. But our clay is a coin of two sides, isn't it? Those of us who have dug holes for posts know that clay can be either terribly sticky, grabbing and eating augers, or so flinty the auger just spins on it like a child's top.

Clay also determines a good part of the aftermath of a hard rain because the layer is so shallow. A shovel will hit it only one or two feet down. Water from a couple of days of precipitation will ride over the impervious layer often resulting in runoff and flooding.

Clay also causes trees to fall. Young tree roots hit the pan and mostly spread out over it. Eventually strong winds in the crown of a tall tree can leverage the tree on its saucer of roots and "TIMBER!"

That happened two years ago to two lofty black locust trees in Bob Mangile's big backyard. He called us and asked if we wanted the hot-burning firewood the downed locusts would provide. We did, and showed up with our three chain saws. I cut the trunks and larger limbs; Cindy and Bob bucked the smaller limbs with the battery saw. The logs provided us much of our larger-than-usual supply of wood for this last winter, which as it turned out, we needed. Ironically in the middle of the cold snap our furnace went belly-up and had to be replaced. It took about a week, during which our fireplace was converted from just a pleasant aesthetic addition to our living room to a house-heating necessity. Trust me, if you're looking for frozen frustration try broken water pipes which we definitely did not want.

The chilly run took nearly all our firewood, but no worries. As you'll recall this spring was very wet. The topsoil over the clay pan became saturated. Then up came a big wind and down came two more Mangile locust trees, big ones. "Want them?" asked Bob. "Yessir." answered us, so out came Mom and Pop's Three-Saw Tree Service. Unfortunately Bob's mature plum thicket was also damaged. We tried to convince him the pile of woody debris was wildlife habitat. He said, no, it was just a pile of woody debris, although those weren't his exact words.

Back home at the Ford Farm several large trees had blown down over our trails, trails to be used in support of Gabe McClain's prothonotary warbler nest box study. Clearing them required several days of noisy, greasy, tiring work wherein the writer soon discovered how out-of shape and out-of-youth he really was. I wedged one saw in a leaning tree, and in trying to cut it out nearly wedged a second. (One reason for multiple saws. I never said I was Paul Bunyon.) Nonetheless the trails are open and our stock of winter firewood has never been better.

Clay. Love it, hate it. It IS a source of firewood. Thank you, Bob. Maybe next year?

Board Minutes...Steve Ford

** President Andy George called the meeting to order 6:00 pm, third floor lounge, Heckert-Wells Hall, PSU. All shiftless members were present except Megan Corrigan and Liz Mangile: Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Cindy and Steve Ford, Kathy Fox, Bob Mangile, Diane McCallum. Elisabeth Peters from PSU's Students for Sustainability was a guest.

** Kathy pointed out that, as per her communication with AOK Director, Jackie Augustine, only board members were invited to monthly AOK Zoom sessions, not all the general membership riff-raff as Steve incorrectly stated in last month's board meeting.

** Otherwise minutes were approved. Bob gave the treasurer's report: \$5,151.52. in checking. Liz will step down as essentially S-G Sperry-Galligar's only treasurer (Jim Brumfield's and Steve Ford's brief stints excepted) in May. For all her good service the board will generously get her a cake (Mavis) for the picnic, which we understand she cannot eat.

** Elisabeth Peters noted that her group will plant native wildflowers in the two raised beds west of Heckert-Wells, and is requesting help in watering over the summer. She'll also make the request at the general meeting.

** April's program will be Purple Martins of the Amazon by Bill Warnes. Despite her temporary absence from Pittsburg, Megan has procured a speaker for the May picnic: Nova Clark, a "refuge ranger" at the Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area. No title yet.

** Andy noted that a new date for KOS conference this fall will be forthcoming (home game conflict).

** Steve whined about the Earth Day Celebration, but everyone else wanted to go ahead with it, so there you go. (Later scuttlebut was that no one has received any information about it from the Earth Day committee after the previous chair stepped down. Later information indicates there will indeed be a celebration on Saturday, April 19).)

** Andy had a few questions he had received from National about the annual report. Nothing major (52 local members x \$15 per = \$780 to be reported).

** Gabe McClain continues to establish prothonotary warbler boxes in our area. Summer funding for student help looks good. Prows expected in our area mid-late April.

Treasurer Report...Liz Mangile

..... 2025 Earth Day

Pittsburg will celebrate Earth Day this year at the Farmers Market, located south of Pittsburg Middle School on North Broadway.

**This Saturday, April 19
8:00 - 1:00**

This will be a combination of Earth Day booths and fresh produce.
.....

March PROGRAM SUMMARY by Steve Ford

Jeff Cantrell



Missouri Department of Conservation, presented a powerpoint program on the Ozark Chinquapin. S-G Audubon members are used to enjoying programs focused on animals and sometimes environmental issues, but rarely on a single plant species. The March program was directed at the ecology and recovery program concerning the Ozark Chinquapin, an endangered species historically located primarily in SW Missouri, W Arkansas, and E Oklahoma. It is not known in Kansas. Attendance was a little thin, which I think was unfortunate because Jeff Cantrell presented quite an enjoyable, professional, information-packed program on what used to be a keystone species in the Ozarks. If you missed it, you missed a good one.

There is a relatively common oak tree in many eastern Kansas woods called the chinkapin oak. The Ozark Chinquapin (OzC) is not the same tree. In fact the OzC is not even an oak, rather it is in the same group as the well-known American Chestnut of the Appalachians, and has many of the same properties and problems as that species. The fruits of the OzC are not acorns, but a softer nut-like affair surrounded initially by a spiny coat

very much like a chestnut. These are favored by wood ducks, woodpeckers, and nuthatches, and are a traditional food of Native Americans and pioneering whites because they don't harbor tannins as do acorns.

The OzC requires warm, sunny, well-drained landscapes, free of clay soils. Rocky glades are often preferred. Jeff wasn't sure about strip mine lands as planting sites. "Maybe."

The OzC is (was) a keystone species in that many other woodland species, including several birds, mammals, and invertebrates depended on it for their well-being. Serious ramifications in reproduction of black bears, and white-tailed deer are examples. Timing of flowering affects many invertebrate populations, which in turn affects communities of migrating birds.

The American chestnut is famous for its demise as a keystone species due to the chestnut blight, an Asian fungus. The OzC has declined greatly for the same reason. (Many other trees have or are predicted to have serious invasive pathogens and insect problems due to human worldwide commerce).

Jeff reported on the dedicated volunteers of the Ozark Chinquapin Foundation which is working to develop viable, blight-resistant seeds. It's a long-term conservation project. We can help (and even get a few seeds and directions for planting). Contact: ozarkchinquapininfo@gmail.com

AUDUBON ARTISTIC NOTEBOOK

Carly Rowtan shares photos from a Spring Break trip to Arizona.



Cactus Wren in Tucson, AZ

Taken at Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum.

Carla recommends visiting this living museum where there are beautiful gardens with native species, various cactuses, an aviary, reptiles (gila monsters are favorites.)



Large and Ancient Saguaro

Taken at Saguaro National Monument



Bluffs of Sedona

Carly and family saw sights like these on a four-mile hike. The climax of the day was the glow they saw in the vista as they ate dinner.





Happenings in Southeast KS

Sightings...



Chipping Sparrow



Chickadee Eggs

Kathy Fox keeps an eye out for new arrivals at her place in the country. She also monitors several bird houses, as evidenced by the chickadee eggs.



Great Egret

Emmett Sullivan keeps his camera ready to document birds in their habitats.

**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**

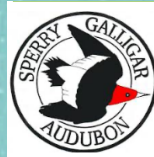
Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____



EVENTS & ETC.

.....
**Want to attract more birds to
your yard?
Establish native plants!**
.....

**Mark your calendar for a
native plant sale:**

Shoal Creek Conservation
Education Center, Joplin

Saturday, May 24
10:00 to 2:00



Purple Poppy Mallow

**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.