



# NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

September 2025 / Issue 1

## OFFICERS

President  
Andrew George  
Vice President  
Megan Corrigan  
Secretary  
Steve Ford  
Treasurer  
Wayne Bockelman

## BOARD SUPPORT

Newsletter Editor  
Cindy Ford  
[cford@pittstate.edu](mailto:cford@pittstate.edu)

Web Master  
Bob Mangile  
[sperry-galligar.com](http://sperry-galligar.com)

Membership  
Diane McCallum  
[dmccallum11@cox.net](mailto:dmccallum11@cox.net)

## Next Program

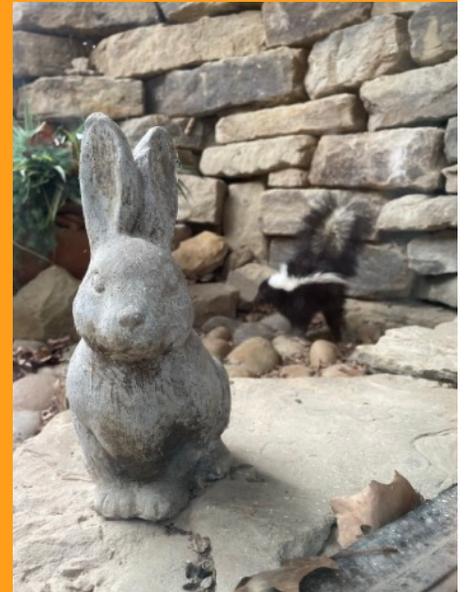
Thursday, 7:00  
September 25  
102 Yates Hall, PSU

Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever  
Kansas Coordinator, Tyler Rafter, will talk about the chapters and highlight some of the work being done in Kansas to support these two species. Find out more about the organizations and learn about the biology of pheasants and quail.

## One Man's Summer

Steve Ford

You could have lain in a ditch scratching for three months and had a more interesting summer than me. Actually my summer peaked in the spring when a skunk sprayed my dog. You'll note the picture of the monster. I don't often capture nature as raw as this, but Cindy and I had recently visited the Martin and Osa Johnson Safari Museum in Chanute, so I was gassed to photograph wildlife. The picture was shot from behind the bedroom window and into a small atrium we call the grotto. The rabbit is supposed to be looking into the bedroom. Cute, huh? I was in little danger from the skunk but thanks for your concern.



Later we happened to be at the Mangile's drinking coffee and eating cookies, and mentioned poor Plum's dilemma. I said "Bob, don't try to con me with that tomato juice hoo-ha. I've tried it before. All it does is turn a white dog pink!"

He said "I've got something," and ran off. I rolled my eyes as far back in my head as my skull allowed, but within 60 seconds he came back with this little lullaby: Bulletin of the State Biological Survey of Kansas, 1974, SKUNKS IN KANSAS: A REVIEW OF THEIR NATURAL HISTORY AND METHODS OF CONTROL by W.Thomas Edmonds, Jr. In it was this recipe:

- 1 quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide (fresh bottle)
- 1 cup baking soda
- 1 teaspoon liquid soap

Mix and use immediately. It will not keep. Be very careful not to get in a pet's eyes. Work into the coat thoroughly, let sit for about five minutes then rinse it out. The skunk smell will be gone.

I was amazed enough Bob had a publication like this at all, but was even more enchanted that he laid his hands on it almost immediately. Is he with the Library of Congress? Cindy was still licking the icing half of her Oreo when he returned.

It would make a better story if I could tell you we tried it, but honestly we were fearful of getting this caustic stuff in Plum's eyes, so we didn't. She blew off eventually, becoming huggable by Labor Day. *(cont. on p. 5)*

## Board Minutes...Steve Ford

The S-G Audubon board met 8-24-2025 for the annual planning meeting at Steve and Cindy Ford's house.

\* Members present: Andy George (President), Elizabeth Mangile, Robert Mangile, Kathy Fox, \* \* Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy Ford, Steve Ford).

\* Wayne reported \$4,751.52 in the treasury, plus a \$15,000 CD

\* Discussion followed concerning a request from Audubon of Kansas (via a form letter to Steve and Cindy from AOK Executive Director Jackie Augustine and Board Chair David Kirch. The Fords are members of AOK and newly on the AOK board). AOK requested donations to help fund the purchase of land management tools: an all-terrain vehicle to support the recently hired land manager in his efforts at on-the-ground management, particularly burning grasslands and spraying noxious weeds. Steve suggested a donation of \$2,000. A lively discussion followed. Eventually a motion to donate \$2,000 passed (leaving \$2,751.52 + CD in the treasury)

\* Steve and Cindy reported on an AOK board meeting they attended May 31 near Witchita. AOK may be involved in a lawsuit in the future concerning water rights at the Quivera National Wildlife Refuge, with two attorneys working pro bono for AOK. A farmer has applied to donate to AOK about a square mile of land in south central Kansas. Discussions will continue concerning its acceptance. Fall events were discussed including an open house at the Hutton Ranch in Nebraska Oct. 5, a Celebration of Cranes, Nov. 7-8, near Sterling, and Lek Trek observing prairie chickens April 9-12.

\* Means of increasing membership were discussed. Always a challenge; perhaps some form of photography activity/display (members used to show a few nature slides at the beginning of meetings); no conclusions. Andy noted this will be his third year as president, implying someone else might be good after this year. Changes in leadership positions are always a challenge in small organizations like ours. How do we get a few more board members?

\* Our facebook needs an overhaul. A subcommittee will look into it: Andy, Megan, Wayne.

\* Board approved \$250 donation for KRPS "Bird Note."

## Treasurer Report...Wayne Bockelman

### *Minutes (cont.)*

\* Megan has found strong speakers, despite her long family obligations in Baltimore. Sep - Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Tyler Rafter); Oct - gray bats (Braidy Hunt); Dec - ponds (Linda Bower); Jan - climate change (Delia Lister); Feb - herps (David Penning); Still open - Nov, Mar, Apr, May. Short discussion about changing the May picnic format. Tabled.

\* The Kansas Ornithological Society will hold its annual conference on the PSU campus Sep 26-28. Student presentations Sat, banquet Sat night, field trips Sun morning followed by a compilation meeting. Public is invited. (Fees)

\* Joplin's Ozark Gateway Audubon anniversary celebration, Sat, Oct 11, GW Carver.

\* Prothonotary warbler project update.

\* Discussion involving refreshments at general meetings in Yates 102 which are not allowed.

We will check out a way we can have refreshments

\* Kathy, thanks for the delicious sliders.

# AUDUBON ARTISTIC NOTEBOOK



**Kathy Fox** captured a view of a gulf fritillary butterfly laying eggs on a vine.

**Carly Rowton** sent photos of her family's vacation in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. She saw many animals, but no wolves. She recommends reading wolf books by Rick McIntyre. Looks like a great trip for animal views!



Osprey at Yellowstone National Park



Blue-winged Teal? with Ducklings near Yellowstone Campground



Sandhill Crane at Grand Teton National Park



Moose at Moose Pond, Grand Teton National Park

## Book Review by Megan Corrigan

Ever since my phone brought the internet to my fingertips, I have been reading fewer books, but a small book on the new books shelf at Pittsburg Public Library caught my eye. It was by Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of “Braiding Sweetgrass,” about the importance of the relationship between humans and nature. Kimmerer has won a McArthur Fellowship and a John Burroughs award for her writing, so I know I want to read “Braiding Sweetgrass” and I have checked it out more than once. But it’s 400 pages and I always get sidetracked and have to return it before I have time to read it. Sigh.

So, I was interested to see a small book, one that given its size might have been published a century ago as a Little Blue Book, by Kimmerer called “The Serviceberry”. This, I thought, I can manage to read. Especially because some of the pages are illustrations! And read it I did.

Kimmerer’s main point is that we are taught the economy is based on scarcity (demand should exceed supply, you can never have too much money or private property, you can take stuff out of the ground for free and sell it for your own profit to people who don’t have it in their ground, etc.) but that if you look at nature, it’s abundance that creates sustainability. She points to the serviceberry, a tree that produces an abundance of berries each season as part of what she calls a “gift economy.”

Kimmerer points to human examples of gift economies based on abundance – little free libraries, back yard zucchini harvests, free farm stands, and many

more. She calls this biomimicry, which is a term I have mostly heard in reference to architecture and engineering (Velcro being the common example), so thinking about biomimicry on a systems level was new to me.

She also questions the paradigm of the Tragedy of the Commons – that whenever a resource is shared, someone will overuse it and eventually ruin it for everyone. This is a paradigm I learned in more than one Pitt State class for my sustainability degree and never questioned. Kimmerer asks what if it’s wrong, and it’s simply an argument used by those who want to privatize resources to justify their privatization? And she cites research by Elinor Ostrom, a Nobel prize winning economist whose work showed that communities can share resources sustainably.

This may sound overly academic, but the book is an easy read, very accessible, and, as I mentioned, there are charming line drawings. It also may sound didactic, but Kimmerer is realistic about the fact that an entrenched economic system built on scarcity will not be upended by neighbors sharing zucchini.

What “The Serviceberry” does very well is provide an ethical footing for gift economies rooted in the natural world, and a vocabulary to apply to human gift economies. Kimmerer recognizes that gift economies tend to occur on small, local scales, but she points out that each of us lives our lives in small local communities, so it’s something every person can take part in and benefit from. Personally, I feel like “The Serviceberry” should be our generation’s “Silent Spring”, a wake up call to get us all thinking more about sustainability.



# Happenings in Southeast KS

## One Man's Summer (cont.)

I've always found skunks interesting. I've trapped my share in box traps over the years. Even though they are weasels they are far from the ferocious predators that typify the family, wolverines for example. When I'd find a skunk in a trap it was usually asleep. I'd simply prop open the door and come back later when it was gone. I admit I never tried to shake one out of the trap.

Striped skunks are fairly common in Kansas, but we used to have another species as well, the charismatic spotted skunk. These little sprites do handstands on their front legs when threatened. Loss of habitat and high pesticide use caused their demise. A couple of years ago two PSU students looked for them statewide with wildlife cameras fastened to tree trunks. You may recall their Audubon program. Unfortunately they found none—"skunked."

Pet stores used to sell them. I had a cute young skunk for just a few days when I was a kid. I don't know where Dad got it, but not from a pet store. We couldn't find a veterinarian willing to remove the as yet poorly developed scent glands, so released it. Just as well. I later read that while some individuals did make gentle pets, some could in fact show a sudden weasel-like behavior. Ouch. Plus of course there is a bit of a rabies threat. (Dad was not a woodsman. He didn't know this.) While all mammals can get rabies, some groups seem more susceptible than others. Skunks fall into this category.

Fun fact for your cocktail party: "Chicago" is named after the Fox Indian name for skunk. Seems there is legend of a giant skunk killed on the southwest shore of Lake Michigan.

Bob's bulletin also addressed the perennial question going back to cave man days: if one dangles a skunk by its tail, can it spray? There is evidence both ways. I'd want to be upwind of that experiment, but if you try it and things go south, I know a man with a recipe.

Our annual May Picnic attracted a sizable group of chapter members who enjoyed the chicken dinner and a presentation by Nova Clark, Marais des Cygne Wildlife Refuge.



Photo by Mangile

Nova Clark with Sharon Giacomelli presenting one of our bluebird boxes.



Diane McCallum produced this photo of a checkered setwing dragonfly.

## Sightings...



Gabe McClain was sighted on several properties researching prothonotary warblers. Sperry-Galligar Audubon built bird boxes for the project.



Cindy Ford photographed an interpreter at Stone Henge, England, having a "discussion" with a rook (member of the crow family).

**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**

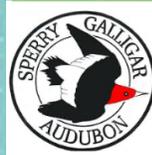
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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



**EVENTS & ETC.**

**Want to learn  
more about birds?  
Check out this  
event.**

Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS) will hold a conference here on the Pittsburg State University campus.

**September 26-28**

Student presentations Saturday, a banquet Saturday night, and field trips Sunday morning followed by a compilation meeting.

Public is invited.

Contact Andy George, Department of Biology, for details.

**Time to renew your dues.**

See Wayne Bockelman at the meeting to update your membership.

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society**

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

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.)

**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.