



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

November 2025 / Issue 3

OFFICERS

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

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
December 4, 2025
102 Yates Hall, PSU

“Pondering the Pond
as Wildlife Habitat”
by Linda Bower, MO
Master Naturalist.
Enjoy photographic
footage of wildlife in
and around one
pond and learn how
to create a great
wildlife pond.

Next Sperry-Galligar Audubon meeting:
Thursday, December 4.

Opportunity to get bird seed for winter

Get bird seed at
Blue Ribbon Farm Store
4th & Rouse
Pittsburg

Fri, December 5, 7:30 - 5:30
Sat, December 6, 7:30 - 1:00

**A percentage of bird seed sales will be
donated to the Sperry-Galligar Audubon
Chapter.**



Photo by C. Ford



Frost flowers
(*Verbesina virginica*)
indicate that we are
on the doorstep of
winter. With the first
freezing
temperatures at
night, these plants
split their stems and
ooze sap, showing
the icy result in early
morning.

Board Minutes...Steve Ford

** The board met in Heckert-Wells October 30, 2025 at 6:00 pm. Present: Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy and Steve Ford, Kathy Fox, Andy George (Pres), Dianne McCallum, Elizabeth and Robert Mangile.

** Wayne reported \$2,844.93 in checking, plus our CD.

** Steve and Cindy reported on AOK board meeting in Ashland, Clark Co. (see newsletter piece).

** Dianne reported National Audubon's new membership roster system is unyieldly. It includes both paid members and supporters (about 190 people), and list duplicates. The monthly change report will be discontinued. Dianne will not keep track of changes, but will keep all rosters. She'll send a roster to Megan and Steve once a year and to anyone else that wants one.

** Megan and Wayne said our chapter now has Paypal for aid in paying annual dues.

** Megan reported speakers: Oct: Bats by Braidy Hunt, Dec: Ponds by Linda Bower, Jan: Travels/Climate by Delia Lister, Feb: Herps by David Penning. March, April, May are open.

** Andy said recent KOS conference at PSU was successful if lightly attended. Gabe McClain's talk on prothonotary warblers won Best Student Paper Award.

** Bird seed sale Fri Dec 5 7:30 - 5:30 and Sat Dec 6 7:30 - 1:00, Blue Ribbon Farm and Home. 5% proceeds to S-G Aud.

** The annual Celebration of Cranes Festival, sponsored by Audubon of Kansas, is upcoming at Quivera National Wildlife Refuge Nov 7-8.

** Andy noted a proposal through Audubon of Kansas for college age individuals who are interested in state-wide on-line meetings to discuss conservation issues.

** Meeting adjourned.

Treasurer Report...Wayne Bockelman

November, 2025

Beginning Balance. \$ 2844.93

Credits

Memberships. \$ 183.11

Book Sales 25.00

Debits

Mileage for speaker,

Picnic Reimbursement,

Nat. Audubon \$142.96

Ending Balance \$ 2910.08

Enjoy another year of Sperry-Galligar Audubon

See Wayne Bockelman at the meeting to update your membership or pay online.

\$15.00/year for Individual or Family Membership
Pay by check or PayPal

ANNUAL AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

**New Year's Day
7:00 a.m.**

Meet at McCune Farm to Market to get location assignment and grab a cup of coffee or breakfast.

For more details, contact Dr. Andy George,
adgeorge@pittstate.edu

OCTOBER PROGRAM SYNOPSIS

Steve Ford



Hibernacula



Gray Bat
Internet Photo: Gary Peeples

Some 70 souls attended Ms. Braidy Hunt's program, "***Shadows in the Caves: The Gray Bat***". Braidy is a recent PSU graduate student, and reported on her study of the gray bat that roosts and have offspring ("pups") in Pittsburg's storm sewers during summers, then migrate to Missouri caves. This bat is a Federally Endangered Species, and, like several bat species, fell victim to a European fungal disease called "white nose syndrome". Most of the colony in Pittsburg died some years ago, but consequently have recovered to about 2,000 individuals, similar to previous population levels.

Braidy caught the bats in a special kind of trap called a harp trap placed at the entrance of the storm sewer. She glued tiny metal tags to them, and

released them. Motus "nodes" were placed near eight known hibernation caves in Missouri, which recorded individual tagged bats as they flew to the caves. Sixty-four bats were tagged in three years. The tags stay glued to the bats for 2-3 weeks. Gray bats are quite vulnerable to disturbance in their winter "hibernacula," so it is important to know where they are, and so try to protect them. City workers are sensitive to the summer colony and leave them alone, according to Braidy.

There were lots of good questions about bats in this pre-Halloween program. Thanks to Braidy for making the long trip from northern Missouri to tell us about them. The big crowd is testament to the species' popularity.



A Celebration of Cranes

The geniuses in Washington had just set a new record for the length of a Federal government shutdown when Cindy and I were in Quivera National Wildlife Refuge in early November. While they were celebrating potential American hunger and the certainty of airline inconvenience we were celebrating cranes at the annual Celebration of Cranes weekend, sponsored by Audubon of Kansas. Projects at the refuge were on hold and the Visitor's Center was closed as tightly as a tin of sardines, but fortunately the roads were open, the weather was fine—if quite windy Saturday afternoon—and most importantly the marshes held water, folks were seeing migrating sandhill cranes AND—drum roll please—whooping cranes.

Most folks. Not us. We were stationed as “spotters” at dawn (and before) in the South Marsh, while all the action was in the North Marsh some eight miles away. We at least heard about everybody else's good fortune and held that warmth in our hearts, especially as they blustered on and on.

Now, a spotter is an “expert” posted at a hot spot. Spotters keep tabs on the local avian community and point out the good stuff to visitors driving past. We qualified as “experts” in that three decades ago we'd spent an afternoon at Quivera, and also about three decades ago had also seen a few whoopers at their wintering grounds in the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in coastal Texas. I *think* they were whooping cranes. At the distance we viewed them they *could* have been Clorox bottles.

So by the time all the excited visitors drove to our site they were not particularly interested in the ruddy ducks, greater yellowlegs, canvasbacks, wigeons, gadwalls, pintails, mallards, pied-billed grebes and coots we were ready to point out, nor to hear about all the harriers and pheasants we had been watching inland. Finally the “boss” (from Audubon of Kansas) sauntered past and cut us loose to go look in the North Marsh for ourselves. Of course by that time all the cranes—sandhills and whoopers alike—were literally gone with the wind, so unless

cranes were on the lunch menu we had no cranes to celebrate.

Alright, I may be too harsh. We did see a few dozen sandhills overhead. It's always pleasant to hear their guttural staccato calls which we hadn't heard for a while. Also the North Marsh held dozens, maybe hundreds, of avocets, those shorebirds with upturned bills. Also dozens of white-faced ibis, the big maroon-colored birds with heavy downturned bills. A single flying long-billed curlew—one of my favorite wetland birds—helped assuage my bitterness at not seeing whoopers (I'm man enough to admit I wouldn't feel so bad if no one else had seen them either). Ring-billed gulls and herring gulls were plentiful too, and we heard a marsh wren, which is too small to count.

We enjoyed lunch at Sterling College, heard some interesting talks about Kansas wetlands and about reconstituting extinct species (I don't think many in the room bought it. We didn't). AOK said that even though I didn't see a whooping crane I rated a t-shirt. So there's that. Cindy refused hers out of spite. She can be that way. (Haha)

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*Google notes there are over 800 whooping cranes now living. I remember when there were only 24. All living cranes stem from those few birds, which makes the gene pool small and thus the entire population vulnerable to various mortality factors. Quivera closes the refuge to all hunting when whooping cranes are in the area, as they were when we were attending the crane festival. Over 20 whoopers were seen when we were there, but as noted, we didn't see a damn one. Pardon my French. **Steve Ford**



Photo by J. Augustine



Happenings in Southeast KS

Sightings...



Marbled Orb-weaver or Pumpkin Spider (so called because of her inflated abdomen)

Kathy Fox found this beautiful spider on October 20th hiding out in her wheelbarrow before she was about to load the barrow with limbs.



Monarch Butterfly on New England Aster

Kathy Fox captured this butterfly feasting on nectar, October 25. She reported seeing more than usual Monarch butterflies this year in her yard. The migration also seemed to last a good while this year.

Increased Sightings of Spring Peepers



Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*) caught in wet leaves after heavy rain on November 21, 2025 just before dark on Robert Mangile's property in Pittsburg, Crawford County, KS

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Dr. A. George, Dept. of Biology, said that there is a westward expansion of the Northern Spring Peeper, being reported as far west in this area as West Mineral in Cherokee County. The range of this treefrog has traditionally been to the East and South of Kansas.



Ring-necked Pheasant

Emmett Sullivan took this colorful photo in April, 2018 in northwest Cherokee County near Claythorne Hunting Lodge. It likely was a bird released for hunting.

**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**

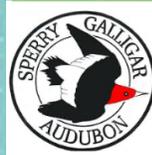
Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____



EVENTS & ETC.

Don't forget to stock up on bird seed at our annual sale...

Friday & Saturday, Dec 4th/ 5th

Blue Ribbon Home & Farm Store
Pittsburg, KS

The generous owners will give a percentage of the sales of bird seed those days to our Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter.

Please submit articles or photos to the newsletter editor by the 10th of each month.

Next submission date:

January 10

Send to:

cford@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.