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News From the Flock, Vol. 2008 Issue 5

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

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NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
Serving Crawford, Bourbon, and Cherokee Counties, Kansas

SGAS Officers

2007-2008

President:

Mavis Benner

Vice President:

Jim Brumfield

Secretary

Barb Robins

Treasurer

Liz Mangile

May 2008

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 5

A Successful Kansas Birding Festival

By Elma Hurt

SGAS members, Mavis Benner, Barb Robins, Liz Mangile, John Hartley and I left Pittsburg at 6 a.m. on April 25, 2008, to bird all our way to Wakefield, KS for the festival. We arrived in time to go on our first guided field trip in a terrible wind. We still managed to see birds in the Milford Lake area. We attended the wine and cheese reception at 7a.m. at Tom's Taxidermy, and enjoyed all the animals, birds and fish on display.

Saturday morning we were up at 3:30 a.m. for breakfast and left for the Greater Prairie-Chicken field trip on Fort Riley property. It was cold and in the 30's! We wore most of the clothes we had taken all at once, to keep warm. Half of the

twelve birders were in an enclosed blind, and the rest stayed in the van to view the fourteen prairie chickens doing their dance. Following that we were driven around the grounds to bird watch and see an active Bald Eagle nest with the adult male in a tree nearby.

Saturday afternoon we attended excellent seminars on Birding by Ear, Backyard Birding and Raptors & Birds. A very nice banquet was held at 7 p.m. with keynote speaker Dave Rintoul.

Sunday, following breakfast, we were off for our final birding around the lake. It was a very good festival, with wonderful meals prepared by the

Methodist Church members, great speakers, friendly people and we saw lots of birds.

Birdwatchers from 13 states spotted ten species of warblers, 16 species of sparrows, and Sprague's Pipit and White-eyed Vireo. I believe many who attended the festival came to view the

Greater Prairie-

Chickens on the leks (mating grounds). This area is rich in migrating birds in late April so our lists totaled over 110 species with several new life birds added. We had a great time! The next festival will be held in 2010.

www.kansasbirdingfestival.org



Annual SGAS Picnic!

Thursday, May 29th 6:30pm
PSU Natural History
Research Reserve



Join us for Ham and Beans cooked by our very own Steve Ford. Contact Mavis Benner if you would like to bring cornbread, dessert, salad or drinks. Bring your own table service, and lawn chair. We will once again be playing BIRDO for \$10 gift certificates to local businesses and a few nice "white elephant" gifts. E-mail Bob Mangile or Delia Lister for directions to the Research Reserve.

Calendar of Events

May 29th—Annual SGAS Picnic at PSU Natural History Research Reserve.

June, July, and August—NO REGULAR MEETINGS!

June 22, 2008—Bushnell Optics Presentation 2pm PSU Yates Hall

September—TBA

Check the Sperry-Galligar website for last minute summer events!

MEETING TIME

We will begin our

meetings at

7:30 P.M.

Yates Hall Room 102.
On the last Thursday

of the month

Board Meeting Minutes

Attending: Mavis Benner, Steve Ford, Doris Grant, John & Julie Hartley, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Carol Newcomb, Barb Robins, Emmett & Ruth Sullivan.

Call To Order By President Benner: Done so at 6 p.m.

Minutes from Previous Meeting: Approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance of \$4747.74. Approved.

Unfinished Business: *Bird Feeding Education Program at Schermerhorn (John):* Linda Phipps said to pick a date; we agreed fall

would be the best time.

Nature Photo Contest (Steve): He and Steve Timme will review proposed rules and have something to hand out at the picnic.

Picnic (Mavis): Tables and chairs are ordered; Mavis has the food signup sheets. *Bushnell Speaker for June 22 (Mavis):* Carol will do a flier.

Ornithology Class (Steve): He will plan for a three-week, Thursday night class, 7-9 p.m., starting in October. Target audience will be citizens who want to know more about birds—basic birdwatching. Possibly a more advanced class might be offered another year. *2009 Officers:*

The slate will be announced at the general meeting tonight. *Toyota/Audubon Conservation Project Proposal (Delia & Steve):* They presented an outline of possibilities, which include a 24-acre natural habitat created at the Research Reserve, with trails. Also included are programs for school and community, and help with travel expenses for schools. SGAS members will help with programs, planting, and trail building.

New Business: *Field Trip (John):* The migra-

By Barb Robins

tory bird count will be held May 17; meet at Applebee's at 8 a.m. and drive to Parsons.

Pre-Planning Meeting (Mavis): She would like to have one in the summer to reduce the time spent at the regular annual planning meeting. We agreed that meeting after the June 22 Bushnell program would be best. *Annual Planning Meeting (Mavis):* Mark your calendars for August 10. The Fords will again graciously host us. Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.



White Winged Dove Sighting

About 10 :30 A.M., Friday, April 18, 2008, I heard a couple of dove call notes that I thought sounded like a White-winged Dove. We've had this species in our yard on two other occasions and the call is somewhat familiar and easy to recognize. I searched the trees in the direction of the call and spotted a dove-like birds as the suspect. I went into the house and got the binoculars and looked through the kitchen window and there it was, a White-winged Dove. My



wife, Liz, looked at the bird to confirm my observation.

Over the past several years White-winged Doves have been moving northward from their usual southwestern range. They have been reported in over 35 Kansas counties with a nesting record in Atchison County in northeastern Kansas. This species is not to be confused with the Morning Dove or the Eurasian Collard Dove. Check your field guide to compare.

By Bob Mangile

General Meeting Minutes

Bird Sightings: Great-crested flycatcher, Green heron, House wren, Chipping sparrows, White-winged dove, Baltimore oriole, Red-breasted nuthatch.

Announcements:

A bird feeding program at Schermerhorn will be held in the fall. Dave Henness announced that the first Birding Festival at Wildcat Glades Audubon Center will be May 2-4. There will be several programs, as well as field trips to Roaring River and Prairie State Park. Steve Hoyle has made bird checklists for Crawford County State Park. Delia Lister reminded us that this Saturday is a volunteer work day at Nature Reach Reserve. Please wear work clothes and bring implements. Bob Mangile will e-mail directions. May 10 is a jointly-sponsored Ride for Nature Reach in conjunction with Tailwinds Bike Shop; Nature Reach will be a stop on their 10-mile ride. Nature Reach T-shirts are here, and you may still order one. The picnic will be May 29; Mavis passed around a signup sheet for sides to the ham and beans Steve Ford is cooking. We will play BIRDO for \$10 gift cards and

“nice” white elephant donations. Carol Newcomb presented the slate for 2009 officers: Mavis Benner, president; Delia Lister, vice president; Barb Robins, secretary, and Liz Mangile, treasurer. There were no nominations for the floor, and the slate was accepted as presented.

Door Prize: Donna Mansell. John Hartley announced that we will take a field trip to the Goode Farm near Parsons, on May 17. Meet at Applebee's at 8 a.m. Martha Price was recognized as retiring from the K-State Extension Office in Girard after working there 47 years.

Featured Speaker:

Bob Mangile introduced Larry Dablemont, well-known freelance outdoor writer, newspaper columnist, and radio

personality. Larry grew up in the Ozarks and has a great passion for them and a

lifelong love of birds. He regaled us with stories about wild turkeys, floating the Big Piney River, the difference between “naturists” and “naturalists”, among other experiences. He has received an expansive education from both professors and pool

hall denizens, and has learned to respect nature and the ecosystem from both of these groups. His observations on the changes in the environment throughout his life and his personal mission to pass on lore that otherwise would be lost were heartfelt and well appreciated by the audience. His Barred owl imitation has no equal.

Next Meeting: Picnic, May 29, at the PSU Natural History Research Reserve.



Birding by Four-Wheeler

By Steve Ford

I was on my four-wheeler in early May enroute to planting some cedar trees on the farm when I was compelled to stop by the marsh and watch shorebirds. Two days before I pulled a couple of slats from the water control structure, and as a result the water level had fallen about a foot leaving about a 10-15 foot apron of mud and wet plants around the perimeter. Well the birds must have been hiding in the clouds, because that exposure of habitat sucked them down almost instantaneously.

One of my immediate observations was how close I could get on a four-wheeler - within about 15 feet of some of them! Much closer than I could have gotten on foot, even though I was fully visible. It was fun to study the specific locations of the birds. Pectoral sandpipers spent their time in the short wet vegetation highest on the shoreline (with a killdeer and a spotted sand-



piper). Lesser yellowlegs got into deeper water up to their bellies, some five inches deep. They continually squabbled with each other, and were continually flying off and

in, slowing folding their long narrow wings after landing, and filling the marsh with their thin, but piercing rather gull-like calls. The Wilson's phalaropes circled like tops, and occasionally seemed to co-ordinate their circling, making them look like square dancers dosi-do-ing side-by-side. I noticed the phalaropes spent a lot of time very near the blue-winged teal, in a bit deeper water than the yellowlegs, so they were swimming, not wading, and it eventually dawned on me that the phalaropes spent their time with the

feeding ducks, rather than those that were in slightly more shallow water preening or loafing. It occurred to me that I was watching an example of commensalism—the ducks didn't seem to be bothered by the phalaropes or benefiting from their presence, but I got the distinct impression that the phalaropes were benefiting from the movement of the feeding ducks. It was not unusual to see three or even four spinning phalaropes within inches of a blue-winged teal! It was also great to see some nice fly-overs: great egrets, cattle egrets, Canada geese, turkey vultures, and of course swallows and cavorting red-winged blackbirds. After over an hour I finally started the four wheeler, thinking its noise and movement would cause everything to fly, but not at all. Needless to say I didn't get as many trees planted as I had intended, but hey, you just have to stop and smell the roses!



The Peace of Wild Things

by Wendell Berry



When despair for the world grows in me
 And I wake in the night at the least sound
 In fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
 I go and lie down where the wood drake
 Rests in his beauty on the water,
 and the great heron feeds.
 I come into the peace of wild things
 Who do not tax their lives with forethought
 Of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
 And I feel above me the day-blind stars
 Waiting with their light. For a time
 I rest in the grace of the world, and I am free.



A Message From the President...

What a fast year! It has been a good year for SGAS. We started off with a bird feeding workshop at the Pittsburg Public Library. Next we had a fun time building and decorating the float for the Christmas parade. Then everyone worked so hard with hand made and crafted items for the bird seed sale. Many members worked hard building blue bird boxes and many were sold at the sale. It was the best ever and that is thanks to **hard work from everyone**.

There have been some great field trips, and a trip to the SEK recycling center. Two barn owl boxes have been erected in our area and, who knows, we may get a family started. The wing tips were fun and we had some good refreshers on bird facts. My thanks to everyone. The officers and board members are dedicated and gave a lot of time to the projects. The refreshments were excellent again thanks to Carol Newcomb. Let's work together to make next year even better!

WANTED:

Persons to give "Wing Tips"

Just to keep our focus on birds each meeting before the main program speaker, a member, who volunteers or who is gently persuaded will give a brief 5 minute presentation. The volunteer can choose a bird and give the description for identification, call, behavior, its nest, what it eats, and any facts that seem interesting. The presenter can show a picture or what ever they choose to share with the group. There are a lot of birds so we can do this a long time. The volunteer can chose their favorite bird or one that interests them or one that is unique.



April Newsletter "Wing Tip"

Baltimore Oriole

These members of the blackbird family built hanging, pendant shaped nests out of a variety of materials such as grass, bark, plant matter, and string. The nests are woven around the tip of a branch with a single opening at the top. The Baltimore Oriole was thought to be separate from the Bullocks Oriole until it was discovered that the two interbreed where their ranges overlap. Some of their favorite foods include oranges, grape jelly, and sugar water from hummingbird feeders.

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

For an introductory rate of \$20.00 you will become a member of both organizations, receive 4 copies of Audubon Magazine annually and the Sperry-Galligar Newsletter.

For rate of \$15.00 you will become a member of Sperry-Galligar Audubon and receive the regular 8 newsletters per year informing you of all our local activities.

If you wish to join the National as well as the Local Chapter : Please make your check out to: National Audubon Society

If you wish to join just the Local Sperry Galligar Audubon : Please make your check out to Sperry Galligar Audubon.

And mail to:

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
P.O. Box 205
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762-0205**

- YES I wish to become a member, of both organizations (\$20.00)
- YES I wish to become a member of the local chapter only (\$15.00)

Name _____

Please Print

Address _____

Phone _____

e-mail address _____

Chapter Code: J 10 7XCH



**FINANCIAL STATEMENT
By Liz Mangile**

April 2008

Beginning balance 3/28/08 _____ **\$4776.67**

CREDITS

Direct deposit from National Audubon _____ \$ 40.00
Three renewals and donation _____ \$65.00
Total _____ \$105.00

DEBITS

Stamps for April Newsletter _____ \$49.20
April Newsletter _____ \$19.73
Yearly expenses for coffee, etc _____ \$22.28
Speaker travel expenses _____ \$50.00

Total _____ \$141.21

Ending balance 4/30/08 _____ **\$4740.46**

**Bushnell Optics Presentation
By Mavis Benner**

A summer program is slated for **June 22, 2008 at 2 pm** at our regular meeting room in **Yates Hall**. Gina McCabe from Bushnell Optics will give a presentation on products she markets for Bushnell. She is the specialist for telescopes, digital binoculars and weather stations. She will bring brochures and catalogs of the other products. Her spouse is an avid birder. Gina's dad is the school superintendent at Altamont. Gina is not a specialist in binoculars or spotting scopes but will try to get answers for you questions. After the meeting we can chat and might even take a local quick bird outing to see what is out and about. So mark you calendar for that program.



**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
Newsletter
P.O. Box 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762**

Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month. No meetings in June July, or August. (Nov/Dec meeting date to be announced) From 7:30 pm to 9 pm, in Room 102, Yates Hall. PSU Campus, Pittsburg, Kansas. Refreshments served and Guests Welcome.

Articles for submission may be sent to
SGAS Newsletter editor-Delia Lister
John Hartley (Editor as of September)
hartley@grapevine.net
Published monthly
Next Deadline is September 8, 2008



**Attention All
Members**

If this box is checked, our records indicate that your membership has expired. Please consider paying local membership dues. Our chapter receives 100% of the local dues only. HOWEVER, you can subscribe to both. Either way you get the newsletter.