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News From the Flock, Vol. 2010 Issue 1

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

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NEWS FROM THE FLOCK . . .

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society serving Bourbon, Crawford, and Cherokee counties in Kansas.

January, 2010

Volume 2010-1

Calendar of Events:

Next Meeting:

"Spider Talk" by Joy Reed;
Jan. 28, 7:00 PM, Room
102, Yates Hall, PSU Cam-
pus. Refreshments served.
Guests
welcome.
Open
board
meeting at
5:45, 3rd
Floor Hecket-Wells Hall.



Next Field Trip:

Short eared owls and
sedge wren. Feb 6. Meet
at the Pittsburg High
School at 4 PM and cara-
van to the lake just east of
Shawnee Trail, and on the
north side of the road or
just meet at the lake about
4:30 PM. Naturalist Jeff
Cantrell from Missouri
Wildlife and Parks will be
leading this trip.

SGAS 10th Birdseed and Crafts Sale

By Bob and Liz Mangile

With the help of many volunteers, our Chapter had another successful Birdseed and Crafts sale at the Pittsburg Meadowbrook Mall on Dec. 5th. Donations of cookies, crafts, bird feeders and houses highlighted the inside offerings. Feeders and houses were made and painted by Bob Mangile and Steve and Cindy Ford. Until this year



KAMO Grain was our birdseed supplier but recently stopped selling birdseed to concentrate on bulk grain. We thank them for the many years of support. Delange Seed, just west of Girard, KS, was the supplier for this sale and worked with us to make it a smooth transition. If you buy seed from them, tell them you are from the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society. Because

of the efforts of those who made cookies, candies, crafts, and donated time and money we made \$451.24. The club made a total of \$1090.43 from all sales. A big thanks to all.

Rarity Spotted in SE Kansas—

By Bob Mangile

In the past eight years this is the third time we have confirmed sighting, with photos, of Inca Doves in our area—Martha Price, Bob Mangile in Crawford County, KS and this one photographed by Nancy Smith in Weir, Crawford County, KS on Dec. 7th this year. Since 1990 there

have been about 70 sightings of Inca Doves in Kansas, most of which were in the western two-thirds of the state. Others claim to have seen them but did not have necessary photographic proof!



FYI—

Website:

<http://pwp.surfglobal.net/rmangile/SGas/index.html>

Mailing Address:

SGAS
PO BOX 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Articles for submission for February newsletter may be sent to hartley@mobill.net by February 5, 2010. Articles should be in WORD or in the body of an e-mail; pictures as JPEG. Newsletter is published monthly September thru May.

Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting

Board, Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

**3rd Floor, Heckert-Wells Hall, PSU
December 3, 2009**

Attending: Mavis Benner, Cindy & Steve Ford, John Hartley, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Barb Robins, Emmett Sullivan.

Call To Order By President Lister: Done so at 5:50 p.m.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance of \$3,731.92.

Old Business:

Programs (Delia for Ann): Joy Reed for January; no one scheduled for March or April. Some possibilities were discussed..

Bird Seed Sale December 5 (Bob): Prices for sunflower seed: 50 lbs./17.00, 25 lbs./10.00. Wild bird mix: 50 lbs./13.00, 25 lbs./8.00. Suet cakes: \$1.25. Thistle: 10 lbs./TBA. He will again ask at the general meeting tonight for more truck workers. Setup will be at 8:30; table volunteers, please bring a calculator.

Field Trips (Diane): CBCs in December and January.

Surveys (Delia): She will hand them out tonight.

Recycling Center (Steve): We probably won't schedule volunteer days due to little interest.

New Business:

Jeff Kurtz [turtle speaker last year]

(Delia): Since we didn't give him a stipend, perhaps we could give him \$50 now since he is currently unemployed? Board voted to do so.

Willis Memorial Placard (Barb): She passed out a prototype—board approved it—she will check with Linda Phipps to determine a preferred mounting method by the bird feeding window at Schermerhorn.

Audubon of Kansas (John): He moved that our organization donate \$100 to aid in their conservation activities in the state. Board approved.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20.

SUMMARY

General Meeting,

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Yates Hall, Room 102

December 3, 2009

Announcements:

President Delia Lister welcomed us and urged us to fill out meeting surveys handed out at the door.

Bob Mangile reminded us of the bird seed sale Saturday and asked for more workers on the truck; please see him tonight if you can help. He posted the feed prices and asked that you bring your donated items between 8:30-9:00. Cindy Ford urged us to go on the CBC (Christmas Bird Count) on New Year's Day; meet at the Scammon convenience store.

Delia showed us photos of her newest Nature Reach adoptions, two cute

young Australian honey gliders.

Bird Sightings:

Lots of American Goldfinches and Snow Geese.

Featured

Speakers:

Steve and Margaret Hoyle, Farlington, presented many fascinating photos and commentary of

their 12-month, 10,000 mile "road trip" this summer to Eastern Atlantic Canada and the Maritimes and places along the way. They were fortunate to see, among other fauna exotic to Kansans, hundreds of thousands of nesting Northern Gannets and a group of Humpback Whales. They arrived early enough to see icebergs off Newfoundland and were able to add 16 new species to their life lists.

Since they enjoy absorbing the culture and history of regions where they travel, they were quite willing to share some of their stories with us. The downside

of the trip was observing firsthand the disappearance of nesting bird food sources due to over fishing.

Door Prize: Donna Brown

--Barb Robins, Secretary



From My Nest

By Delia Lister, President

I wanted to send a big thank you to all of the those who worked and/or purchased seed at our Annual Bird Seed Sale. Despite the poor economy we did quite well. I also wanted to thank the small group that joined in on our annual Christmas Bird Count. It was a great day to be out despite the cold. As we look into the coming year I hope we can find a new service project for SGAS and be looking for more information on Earth Day Events in April. Let's make 2010 our best year yet.



Mined Land Christmas Bird Count

By Steve Ford

Nine disgustingly perky birders (for 7:00 AM New Year's Day) and I met at the Scammon Express Lane mini mart to comb our 15 mile diameter circle for winter birds. It was quite cold, only 10 degrees all morning, but as the sun was out and there was no wind the morning was surprisingly pleasant. The temperature rose to a balmy 24 in the afternoon, but the wind also picked up, so the wind-chill made it a little uncomfortable. The landscape was nearly all covered with snow, and all water except a few streams were frozen solid. We saw forty-two species, which is some 3 or 4 more than we usually see. A prairie falcon as well as several rough-legged hawks were seen by other birders. We came across an open grove of large trees – ideal for our intrepid mascot the red-headed woodpecker—Sure enough, we did see a few there as well as a couple of pileated woodpeckers. What amused us was that one of the juvenile red-heads seemed to be harassing a pileated, (the later of course is big enough to swallow the former whole!) The pileated just seemed to roll its eyes and ignore the aggressive youngster. It always is interesting to compare the rather tame countryside of the warm months with the same area in the teeth of winter – the landscape is starkly beautiful in snow and ice, but somehow less benign, a little more wild, but filled, despite the edge, with wildlife!

The State of Grassland Birds

The following article are excerpts for *State of the Birds: The 2009 Report*, stateofthebirds.org.

Of 46 grassland-breeding birds, 48% are species of conservation concern, including 4 with populations that are federally endangered. Eight of twelve sparrow species are listed as of conservation concern. Of the 42 grassland species with sufficient monitoring data, 23 are declining significantly. The grassland birds indicator, based on data for data for 24 of 25 obligate species--species that occur in these habitats and a subset of species that are restricted to these habitats--dropped by nearly 40% from the baseline value, with a slight recovery evident in the last five years. Farm conservation programs provide millions of acres of protected grasslands that are essential for the birds in a landscape where little native prairie remains. Some of the American landscape's most iconic birds are showing steep declines. Eastern and Western meadowlarks, Bobolinks, Short-eared Owls, and Northern Bobwhites have declined by 38–77% since 1968. Species that breed in the Great Plains of the United States and Canada and that winter in Mexico's grasslands are showing steep declines including Sprague's Pipit, Lark Bunting, Lesser and Greater prairie-chicken, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Northern Bobwhite, and Northern Pintail. Lesser Prairie-Chicken (at right) is a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. More than 95% of tall grass prairie has been converted to agriculture and other uses. Short and mid grass prairies continue to be converted to agriculture as well. Grassland birds have declined because of the intensification of agriculture, including larger fields with fewer grassy edges, native weeds, and insects, as well as the spread of row crops into drier regions. Pastures cannot support many birds if overgrazed, burned too frequently, or burned at the beginning of the nesting season or the end of the grass-growing season. Grasslands in public lands and parks are often mowed too frequently and kept too short to provide bird habitat. Open areas are frequently allowed to revert to forest instead of being managed as grassland. High commodity prices and demand for bio-fuels contribute to reduced acreage for farm conservation programs. Wind turbines, if improperly sited, can fragment grasslands and disrupt nesting activity of game birds such as Lesser Prairie-Chickens. Global warming is expected to increase drought conditions in grassland regions, leading to lower productivity and reduced food supply for birds. Farm conservation programs remain our best tool for restoring and maintaining grasslands for birds, especially in areas of row-crop agriculture and across the short-grass prairie. Several other solutions include hay cutting, grazing, mowing, and burning can be conducted in ways that are compatible with birds, usually at very small cost to the producer. These costs can be compensated by conservation programs that provide other benefits as well, such as erosion control. Wetland conservation programs should continue to include adjacent grasslands because such areas are valuable for both grassland and wetland birds. Many national, state, and local parks could be managed to benefit grassland birds, and new acquisitions from willing landowners should be explored. Management should include a balance of disturbance to eliminate woody vegetation while allowing a healthy tall grassland. This is an international problem. More than half of grassland obligate species depend on Canadian prairie habitats, as well as those in the central United States. Desert grasslands in Mexico host a wide variety of U.S.-breeding birds in winter, but more than a million acres have been converted to agriculture in the past five years. Ranchlands are often overgrazed, causing desertification. Migrants such as Bobolink (at left), Upland and Buff-breasted sandpipers, American Golden-Plover, and Swainson's Hawk fly to South America where grasslands are being converted to agricultural production.



Green Tip—

Avoid using air fresheners that contain chemicals. Freshen the air in the house by using baking soda, cedar chips or blocks, or dried flowers



NEW RULES ON EAGLES

from *The Birding Community, E-Bulletin*, Nov. 2009, www.refugenit.org/birding.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) released a final rule last month that will allow limited incidental "take" or disturbance of eagles through public safety activities or other development projects. The permits will only be granted if they will not impact the goal of maintaining or increasing eagle populations. The Bald Eagle was removed from the Endangered Species Act in 2007, and incidental take permits had been allowed under the ESA. There are now two new permit types that will be allowed. One would be permitted when the disturbance is associated with but not the purpose of, an activity (e.g., during real estate development). The second would allow the removal of nests under limited circumstances, particularly if they create safety concerns (e.g., near airports).



Deliberate killing of eagles is still outlawed. In order to manage these population impacts, each FWS region will have a limit of no more than five percent of the estimated annual

regional eagle productivity.

GBBC—SCAS members are urged to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count, Feb 12-15. For details go to www.birdsource.org/gbbc,

Bird Feeding Tip—

Birds need grit in the winter as well as summer. When snow is on the ground, clear a patch down to bare earth near the feeder.



Application for Membership Form

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

—For an introductory rate of \$20 you can become a member of both The National Audubon Society and SGAS. You receive four copies of the National Audubon Magazine and all local SGAS newsletters.

—For \$15 you can become a member of the local SGAS and receive only the local newsletters.

—If you wish join National Audubon and local SGAS, complete this form along with a check made out to National Audubon Society and return SGAS treasurer.

—If you wish to join only the local SGAS, complete this form along with \$15 and return to SGAS treasurer.

Make checks out to SGAS.

Mail address is SGAS, PO Box 205, Pittsburg, KS 66762

___ I wish to join both organizations and am enclosing \$20.

___ I wish to join only the local SGAS and am enclosing \$15.

Please Print information:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Chapter Code: **COZJ100Z**



Financial Statement for December, 2009

Beginning balance-----\$3717.00

Credits

Local dues & t-shirts-----\$ 252.00

Feed sale-----\$2749.25

Total-----\$3001.25

Debits

Stamps 300-----\$ 132.00

Printing of 300 newsletters-----\$ 15.08

Donation to Jeff Kutz-----\$ 50.00

Paid DeLange Seed for feed -----\$1340.75

State sales tax for feed sale-----\$ 159.51

Donation Ks. Audubon-----\$ 100.00

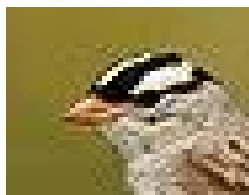
Money for cash box-----\$ 100.00

Total-----\$1897.34

Ending balance-----\$4820.91

Bird Facts—

Check your white crowned sparrow this winter—there may be two different subspecies. The dark-lored species (below at left) will be most common in our area. The space between the bill and the eye (the lore) is black. The white strip does not meet the bill. In a different subspecies, the "Gambel's," (below at right) the white stripe extends to the bill. Although the Gambel's generally is found in the western US, it may occasionally be found in our area



return address
SGAS
PO Box 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762



January

Attention All Members

Dues Due

If the box is marked, our records indicate that your membership has expired. Please consider rejoining as a member of the local SGAS only. The local chapter receives 100% of the dues paid.