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News From the Flock, Vol. 2010 Issue 2

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.

February, 2010

Volume 20100-2

Calendar of Events:

Next Meeting: Elma
Hurt on Bluebirds, Feb.
25, 7:00 PM, Room 102,
Yates Hall, PSU Cam-
pus. Refreshments
served. Guests wel-
come. Open board
meeting at 5:45, 3rd
Floor Hockett-Well Hall.

Next Field Trip:
Great Blue Heron Rook-
ery in the Mined Land
area near Big Brutus, led
by Emmett Sullivan. This
was the most popular
bird walk last season.
The tentative date is
March 27, 2010, de-
pending on the weather.
Please watch your e-
mail and/or attend the
March SGAS meeting for
further details.

FYI—

Website:

[http://pwp.surfglobal.net/rmangile/
Sgas/index.html](http://pwp.surfglobal.net/rmangile/Sgas/index.html)

Mailing Address:

SGAS
PO BOX 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Articles for submission for
March newsletter may be sent
to hartley@mobill.net by
March 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.

Perseverance Pays Off—

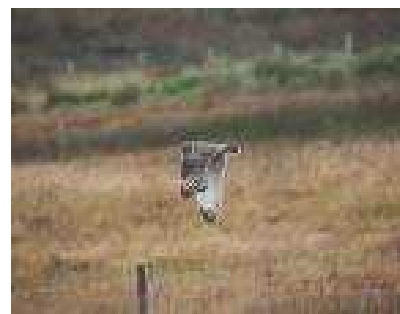
By Diane McCallum

Shawnee Trails, CA—The
weather tried to dissuade us
from our bird walk on Feb-
ruary 6, but 11 intrepid peo-
ple prevailed despite the
cold temperature and a few
impassable roads. After be-
ing turned back three times
by muddy roads, the
group
found a
parking lot
at Shawnee
Trails and
hiked across soggy fields in
search of short-eared owls.



We saw cardinals,
horned larks, mal-
lards, Canada and
snow geese, grackles
and northern harriers.
The overcast sky
made it difficult to see
as the light faded, but
then we heard a short
bark, as if there was a
small dog in the field.

Not long after that, we spot-
ted a short-eared owl as it
rose into the air. In all, we
saw approximately 8 owls
before the light failed com-
pletely. Many thanks to Jeff



Cantrell, Missouri Dept. of
Conservation, for his guid-
ance and refusal to give up
on finding owls, and to all
the others who joined us.

Comeback Kids!

Trumpeter swans have
made a comeback from the
brink of extinction. Hunted
for meat and feathers,
trumpeters were down to
77 breeding pairs in Can-
ada and 50 pairs in the US
in 1933. Due to efforts at
conserving habitat and egg
hatching and release, the
swans number over 35,000
and have a conservation
status of "least concern."
Trumpeters are not on the
endangered species list,
but are protected by the
Migratory Bird Act. In east-
ern Kansas, the swans is
probably from the Great
Lakes group. Threats to
these birds include inva-
sion of habitat by Mute swans
and power wires.

Trumpeters are the larg-
est native NA bird in terms
of weight and length with
wing spans up to 8 feet.
They are the largest water-
fowl in the
world.

They typi-
cally live 12
years in the
wild and up
to 35 years
in captivity.
Reports of
flocks of
trumpeter
swans in
the mid-
west have
been nu-
merous this
year.

Donna Smith took the pic-
ture below on January 28th
of a banded swan in a flock
of 12 near Scammon, KS.



Meeting Minutes—

MINUTES

Board, Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

3rd Floor, Heckert Wells Hall, PSU
January 28, 2010

Attending: Mavis Benner, Cindy & Steve Ford, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Barb Robins.

Call To Order By President Lister: Done so at 6:00 p.m.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance of \$4792.21; made \$72.70 interest on CDs in 2009.

Old Business:

Programs/Vice President (Delia): Anne Willis has resigned. Programs are set except for April; Bob will contact someone.

Bird Seed Sale (Bob): We made a profit of \$1090 (\$451 on crafts, \$639 on seed). When leftover suet cakes are sold, we will have a profit of \$1155.50. Discussion ensued as to how we can make the crafts table more eye-catching and perhaps make large signs for the seed truck.

Field Trips (Mavis for Diane): Owl trip to Shawnee Trail Conservation Area this Saturday.

Survey (Delia): The results indicate preferences are scattered somewhat evenly across the programming categories.

Bird Count (Steve): He will report at the general meeting.

New Business:

Placemats at Sunflower Kiwanis

Spaghetti Feed: Would we want to donate \$20 to place our logo on them? Approved.

Fence in Front of Sperry Prairie

(Delia): It has still not been constructed by PSU Maintenance Dept. Do we want to keep it on hold, or is there a better use for our \$400, such as mowing? Steve will check into heavy-duty weed-eating devices and report later.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45.

--Barb Robins, Secretary

SUMMARY

General Meeting, Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Yates Hall, Room 102

January 28, 2010

Announcements:

President Delia Lister: First Response for Animals workshop will be held in Frontenac on Feb. 20.

Bob Mangile: Great Backyard Bird Count happens between Feb. 12-15. See him for brochures.

We made \$1090 on the bird seed sale. There are leftover suet cakes here to night for \$1.00.

Mavis Benner: The annual Kansas Birding Festival in Wakefield will be held Apr. 23-25. Jeff Cantrell will lead a short-eared owl trip to Shawnee Trail Conservation Area on Feb. 6. Meet at Pittsburg High School at 4 p.m.

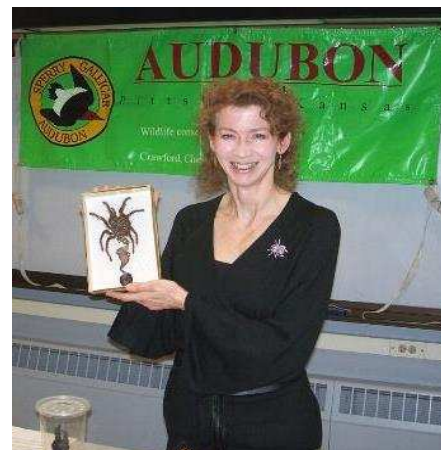
Steve Ford: The Christmas Bird Count did not yield as many species as last year's; he will bring a list to the next meeting.

Bird Sightings: Purple Finch, Chipping Sparrow, Golden Eagle



(Missouri), Mute Swans (Wichita), Trumpeter Swans (Scammon).

Naturalist Quiz: Delia showed a



video clip featuring bioluminescence at the bottom of the sea, and color-changing cephalopods.

Featured Speaker: Delia introduced Joy Reed, tarantula breeder, who gave us photographed and live looks at the creatures. There are 928 known species, various ones on every continent except Antarctica and

Europe. She explained how they are different from other spiders and dispelled myths about them. We

learned about their feeding, breeding, and defense functions and discovered you can have fun with tarantulas by attending conferences, going on expeditions, and decorating your home.

Door Prize: Harry Krug

--Barb Robins, Secretary

From My Nest —

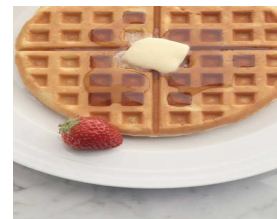
By Delia Lister, President

Thank you to those who made it out for Joy Reed's tarantula talk. She did a fantastic job, and I think we all learned a greater appreciation for those eight legged creatures! I hope all of you are taking advantage of the winter weather and are spreading lots and lots of seed from the SGAS bird seed sale. I know



the birds at my feeders are appreciating it! I am starting to look forward to spring though and am ready to learn more about bluebirds from Elma Hurt at the end of the month. I would encourage any of our members who have taken interesting trips, or have an interesting topic that would make for a great program to let us know as we are starting to get some ideas for programs for next year. Also, don't forget about Waf-

fles and Woodcocks 2010. This will be a short notice get together when the woodcocks begin displaying. This was a great event last year, and I hope we can have a great turn out again.



State of Urban Birds



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

Although bird communities in urban environments are often dominated by a few species such as Rock Pigeons and House Sparrows, a surprising number of native birds have adapted to life around humans. American Robins can thrive in many habitats, including lawns with abundant earthworms. Gulls, vultures, and crows seek abundant food at garbage dumps and along roadsides. Hummingbirds, chickadees, sparrows, finches, woodpeckers, and other birds take advantage of bird feeders. Even hawks and owls find increasingly safe nesting sites and abundant prey in our towns and cities.

The urban/suburban indicator, based on data for 114 native bird species, shows a steady, strong increase during the past 40 years, driven primarily by a small number of highly successful species such as Wild Turkey, Double-crested Cormorant, vultures, gulls, doves, House Finch, and Great-tailed Grackle. In general, urban-adapted species from eastern forests, especially permanent residents, have shown stable or increasing populations, whereas migratory birds, such as Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, and Wood Thrush, show the same declining trends as many eastern forest birds. This suggests that birds living in urban habitats year-round benefit from higher over winter survival. Creating green space for birds in cities can help adaptable urban birds as well as migrants stopping over during their long journeys. The wide variety of native birds that thrive in urban areas underscores the importance of these artificial habitats to the survival of many bird populations. Creating green space with landscaping with native plants in backyards and parks, adopting architecture and lighting systems that reduce collisions, and keeping pets indoors will provide the greatest benefit to breeding birds and migrants seeking safe places to rest and find food during their spectacular journeys. The most common birds in nearly every urban environment are exotic species introduced from other parts of the

world. Exotic species also occur in most natural habitats in North America and many have significant negative effects on native birds, other wildlife, and humans. European Starlings can damage seed and fruit crops and compete with native birds for nest cavities. Mute Swans, introduced from Eurasia in the 19th century, have displaced ducks and geese from wetlands and have overgrazed aquatic vegetation. Other exotic birds have positive economic impacts, such as Ring-necked Pheasant, a popular species with hunters. Of 17 common exotic species, some have been established for more than a century and now occur across the continent. However, Rock Pigeon, European Starling, and House Sparrow have shown stable or declining trends over the past 40 years.

Some recently introduced species are growing such as the Eurasian Collared-Doves, whose abundance and distribution have increased exponentially since they colonized Florida from the Bahamas in the 1970s.—



Bird Fact:

The first attempts to introduce the European Starling to the United States from 1872 to 1890 were unsuccessful. After repeated efforts to introduce the bird, it was finally successfully brought to New York City on March 16 1891. Eugene Schieffelin, a wealthy New Yorker with a strong passion for the birds of Shakespeare decided to import and release the starlings into New York City's Central Park. He also imported bullfinches, chaffinches, nightingales, and skylarks; however, these birds were not as successful as the starling. The starling began to breed almost immediately after being released. The first recorded nest was under the attic of the American Museum of Natural History, which some people perceived as a sort of in-your-face gesture



GREEN TIP—



Ant deterrent tips

Here's some things you may want to try before reaching for that can of insecticide, depending on the application:

- Pouring lemon juice around areas ants frequent.
- Sprinkle cinnamon or place in cheesecloth bags in affected areas. Cinnamon was a very popular choice with quite a few readers reporting it being highly effective.
- Baking soda can deter ants - pour a solid line in areas of activity and they won't cross it.
- A ring of coffee grounds around sensitive plants can discourage ants.
- A puree blend of orange peel and water can be applied to an area to discourage ants from crossing.
- Ants hate vinegar; so spray it around doorways and other areas they frequent to repel them. A small container of vinegar mixed with honey placed in affected areas appears to do the trick too.
- A reader reported baby powder stopped them dead in their tracks.
- Pouring boiling water over their tracks (destroys the scent trail).
- Sprinkling a circle of ground cloves around the pet food bowls

Liz's Larder

By Liz Mangile



Walnut Clusters

- ½ cup flour
- 1 egg
- ¼ baking flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ squares chocolate melted
- ½ cup soft margarine
- 2 cups chopped walnuts
- 1/3 cup sugar

Sift dry ingredients together. Cream margarine; gradually add sugar, add egg, mix well. Stir dry ingredients into creamed mixture. Add vanilla, melted chocolate, and nuts. Drop by teaspoonful on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes.

Membership in National Audubon and Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

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

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

—If you wish to join both National Audubon and SGAS, please complete this form and submit it to the SGAS Treasurer along with a check for \$20 made out to National Audubon Society.

—If you wish to join only the local SGAS, complete this form and submit it to the SGAS Treasurer along with a check for \$15 made out to SGAS for yearly dues.

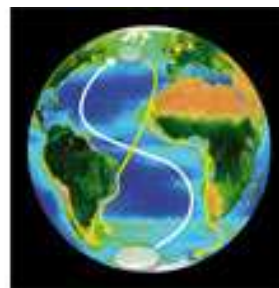
This form and the accompanying check should be sent to SGAS, PO Box 205, Pittsburg, KS 66762

Terns Make A Lot of Turns

The Arctic tern travels an average of around 44,000 miles roundtrip from Greenland to the Weddell Sea, on the shores of Antarctica, and back to the breeding grounds in Greenland

It turns out that the birds did not immediately travel south, but spent almost a month at sea in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean. The researchers believe the birds use this lengthy stop-over as a chance to "fuel-up" with food before continuing on to less fruitful waters farther south.

From lifescience.com, Life Science, *Record Migration*, 1/11/2010.



Membership Application Form

☐ I wish to join both National Audubon Society and SGAS and am enclosing \$20.

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

Personal Information (please print):

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Chapter Code: COZJ100Z



Financial Statement January 2010

Beginning Balance-----\$4820.91

Credits

Suet cakes sold & local membership-----\$152.00

Local memberships-----\$ 30.00

Total credits-----\$182.00

Debits

Newsletter printing-----\$28.70

Donation to Kiwanis-----\$20.00

Total debits-----\$48.70

Ending balance-----\$4954.21

Submitted by Liz Mangile, Treasurer

Return Address
SGAS
PO Box 205
Pittsburg, KS 66762



February

Dues Due

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

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