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### News From the Flock, Vol. 2011 Issue 4

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

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# NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry- Galligar

Audubon Chapter

Officers 2009-2011

**President:**

Delia Lister

**Vice President:**

Meagan Duffee

**Secretary**

Barb Robins

**Treasurer**

Liz Mangile

**Newsletter Editor**

Cindy Ford

[cford@pittstate.edu](mailto:cford@pittstate.edu)

April 2011

VOLUME 2011 ISSUE 4

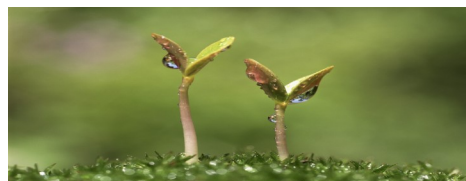
## Have you Heard about the Sperry Prairie?

It is time for a progress report on the Sperry Prairie, established in front of the raptor cages at the PSU Natural History Reserve. The prairie is now approximately three years old, has had its first controlled burn, and is filling in with more native wildflowers each year. The Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter funded the prairie in honor of Ted Sperry, who was instrumental in establishing the first restored prairie in the U.S. It is located in Madison, Wisconsin.

Our Sperry Prairie was originally planted with seeds from the Missouri Wildflowers Nursery and later overseeded with species collected by Bob Mangile. We are now just starting to see the results of the seeding. Nearly 50 species of wildflowers have been added to the prairie with three species of native grass. It is still too early to see all of the species since some plants may take years to show and some species may not have adapted to the site, but the diversity is improving each year.

Soil was added to the site prior to planting in order to deepen the topsoil. Even though the original vegetation was eliminated by Round-up, we have been challenged by the persistence of Fescue and Johnson grass creeping into the small prairie. The controlled burn this year and another application of Round-up may help to discourage the invasive grasses. Management of a small restored prairie is a long-term process.

Prairies are disappearing in the U.S. and are now considered the most endangered ecosystem in the world. Good native prairies are rare and should be preserved for the diversity of plants and animals that live in them. Since so many native prairies have been disturbed or lost, restoration is the next best practice. Restoration can be useful in building the "bones" of a prairie, although the diversity will never be as high as in a native prairie. In time, however, restored prairies can improve if there is a seed bank in the soil or if there are native prairie species nearby. Good management is critical to the success of the restored prairie.



### Calendar of Meetings

**April 28:** Rick Hines, Erie will present "Tanzania and Mt. Kilimanjaro"

**May 26:** Annual Sperry-Galligar Picnic will be held at the Homer Cole Community Center, 3003 North Joplin, Pittsburg

Max Good, Parsons, will present "Establishing Prairie Wildflowers"

**June, July, and August — NO REGULAR MEETINGS**

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETING  
APRIL 28, 7:00  
YATES 102

**Board Meeting Highlights  
Barb Robins, Secretary**

In attendance: Mavis Benner, Carolyn & Charles Chips, Meagan Duffee, Cindy & Steve Ford, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Carol Newcomb, Martha Price, Barb Robins, Emmett & Ruth Sullivan

Martha Price accepted the nomination for Vice President.

The newsletter can be sent as an e-mail version. A test run will be made.

Delia asked about the interest in obtaining a golden eagle for Nature Reach where the club was asked to share care costs.

Martha offered to take care of door prizes at the meetings.

Carolyn obtained numbered metal tags that were attached to bluebird boxes at Crawford State Park

**Financial Statement  
Liz Mangile, Treasurer  
March, 2011**

Beginning balance-----	\$3450.70
<b>Credits</b>	
Local Dues	\$ 75.00
Total-----	\$ 30.00
Ending balance-----	\$3525.70

**Liz Mangile, Treasurer**

**Send your newsletter articles, bird sightings, and nature notes to C. Ford by May 6, 2011.**

**cford@pittstate.edu**

**From my Nest  
Delia Lister, President**



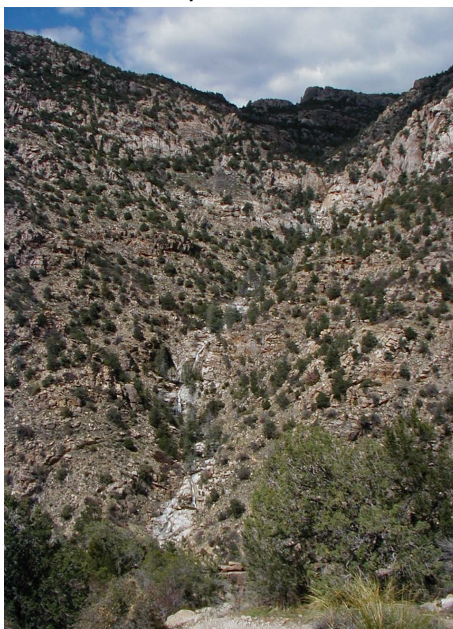
Happy Spring everyone! I hope you are as ready to get moving outside as I am. I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate Meagan Duffee, our Vice President as she was nominated for PSU Student Employee of the Year for the second year in a row. Only 19 students on campus were given this honor. She has been the Nature Reach student assistant for about three years now, and she has been a huge boost to

the program.

I also want to mention again that the Nature Reach/SGAS Summer Camp is coming the week of July 18 in the mornings. We will be working with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade this year. If you would like to volunteer or know of an interested student please let me know as soon as possible. I hope to see everyone at the April meeting. Rick Hines is a good friend of Nature Reach and will do a great presentation for us.

**February Featured Speaker:  
Dr. Cindy Ford**

If thoughts of a desert conjured only images of barrenness, cacti, aridity, and poor birding habitat, Cindy Ford expanded our imagery boundaries with her biologist's and traveler's description of Big Bend National Park, on the Rio Grande River. Cindy has been on the PSU faculty for 25 years and has led several student trips to the area. She gave us an overview from biological, geological, and historical viewpoints, describing characteristics of the four U.S. desert regions in general, then Big Bend's indicator plant communities and life zones. It was surprising to hear there is such diversity: a river floodplain, the Chihuahuan desert, shrub desert, grassland, and woodland. Many of the plants had surprisingly beautiful flowers, and the bird photos whetted birder appetites to expand their life lists. Cindy also recommended other sites to visit in and around Big Bend. — Barb Robins, Secretary

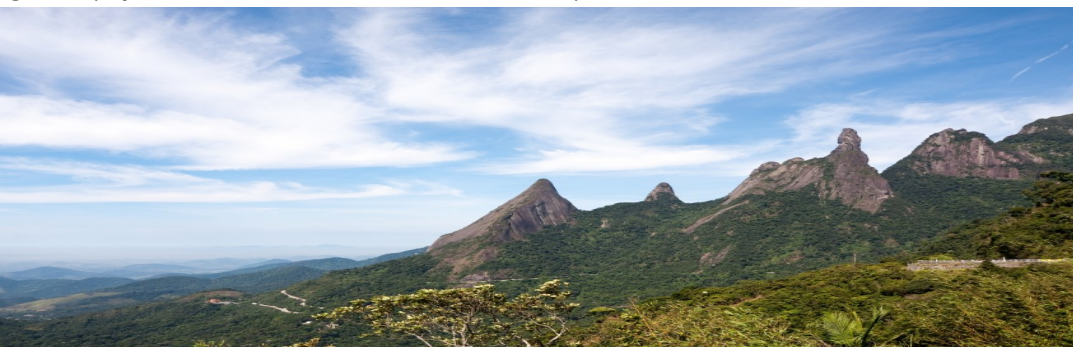


**Diane McCallum read recently in "American Profile" Magazine that "For only the second time since 1955, more than 100 species of birds were found across the state of Kansas in the 2010 Christmas Bird Count."**

## Green Grey Steve Ford

The next-to-the-last novel I've read was on a *Kindle* - one of those electronic readers. I received it as a Christmas gift, and had to act thrilled and grateful, and all that, but after having read a rather gripping novel on it, I have to admit it was pretty nice. My *last* novel however was a ninety-one year-old first edition Zane Grey which set me back six bucks at an antique store. I bought it because I liked the rather Art Nouveau artwork on the green cover - a man in a campaign hat carrying a rifle walking down a woodland trail. "The Man of the Forest" was the title. I had never read Zane Grey, but since this little volume cost me about as much as lunch at the Mall Deli, I figured I'd better get my money's worth and read it. I was expecting a two-fisted shoot'em up, and while there was a little of that (along with some racism) mostly it was an engaging drama set amongst pristine mountain landscapes of Arizona, which Grey painted vividly - indeed passionately - page after page. I wanted to be there. I wanted to be The Man of the Mountain, who not only cleaned the outlaws out of the woods, but also got the girl. But to the point. Grey wrote rather eloquently and at some length, through his protagonist, Milt Dale (alas not Steve), about ecological relationships. For example, Dale, the consummate woodsman, remarked that while many people feared and hated wolves, he had come to realize that they, and all predators, were a necessary and beautiful part of nature. That without wolves, the deer would overpopulate the mountains, decimate the vegetation, and ultimately ruin the forest and all the animals that depended on it. This from a novelist in 1920!

The great ecologist and conservationist, Aldo Leopold, in his 1940 book, "A Sand County Almanac," wrote in the chapter titled "Thinking Like A Mountain" that very message. Leopold said that while the deer fears the wolf, the mountain fears the deer. Unfortunately this indeed became a reality in the Kaibab Plateau of Northern Arizona in the 1920s and 30s. All the larger predators were systematically poisoned, trapped, and shot by people who thought the result would be wonderful deer hunting. The deer numbers exploded until they ate all the vegetation, then the deer starved and their numbers plummeted until there were none left to hunt. Of course the denuded landscape could not support the rich diversity of other animals it once did, including both predator and prey species alike. I don't know if Grey and Leopold influenced each other, but I was fascinated with Grey's ecological insight and his advocacy in a novel. Perhaps one cannot always judge a book by its cover, but I got lucky with this little green gem. (My *Kindle* doesn't even have a cover!)



## NATURE SIGHTINGS & SOUNDS

### New or unusual birds

**Brown thrasher**  
**Parula warbler**  
**Prothonotary warbler**  
**Common loon**

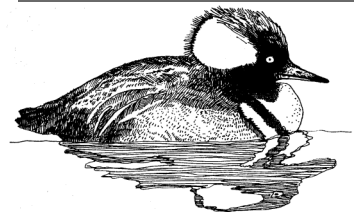
### Frogs Calling

**W chorus frog**  
**S leopard frog**  
**N spring peeper**  
**American toad**  
**Gray treefrog**

### Last Issue Bird Quiz

.....  
Tufted titmouse

### NAME THIS BIRD



**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

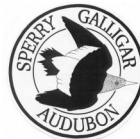
Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Chapter Code: C I Z J 1 0 0 Z



**CALENDAR OF FIELD TRIPS**

**April 30 — Shorebirds & Spring Migrants.**

Meet at Applebee's in Pittsburg at 7:00 a.m. to carpool to Four Rivers Conservation Area near Nevada, MO; bring lunch & snacks;

**May 21 — Warblers & Late Spring Migrants.**

Meet at Highway Inn in Girard at 7:00 a.m. to carpool to Crawford County State Lake at Farlington; plan to eat breakfast at Highway Inn

**June — Summer Residents.** Trip to Roaring River State Park in MO; please contact trip leader if interested

**PHOTO CONTEST IN MAY**

There is still time to enter your photo in the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Photo Contest. Prizes will be given at our May Picnic.

Contact Steve Ford for details.  
(620) 235-4745  
sford@pittstate.edu

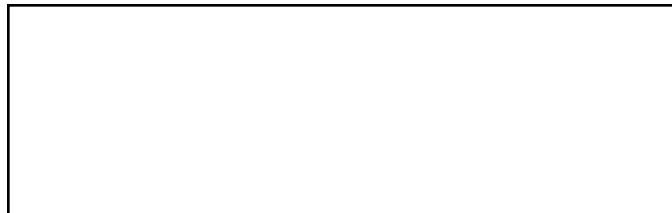
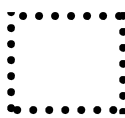


**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society**

**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 7:00 pm to 9 pm, in Room 102, Yates Hall. PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS. Refreshments served and Guests Welcome.**



**Visit our website:**

<http://pwp.surfglobal.net/rmangle/>

**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.

