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News From the Flock, Vol. 2017 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 2015 - 2017

President:

Wayne Bockelman

Vice President:

Megan Corrigan

Secretary

Barb Robins

Treasurer

Liz Mangle

Newsletter Editor

Cindy Ford

cford@gus.pittstate.edu

April 2017

VOLUME 2017 ISSUE 4

Songs of Spring by Steve Ford

Some fifty years ago when I was starting to study vertebrate zoology at Indiana State University I acquired a cassette tape – high tech at the time – of the calls of all the frogs and toads (Anurans) of the eastern U.S. Once when I visited my grandmother I took along the tape thinking she'd enjoy hearing two or three species. Even though she was not a nature lover she got such a kick out of all the grunts, squeals, snores, coughs, burps, and trills that she wanted to listen to the whole tape, and for well over an hour we chuckled over the of "music of the marsh." I still find these harbingers of spring delightful, optimistic, and somehow quite humorous. They sing mostly, but not exclusively, at night, and it's the males we hear. Here are some from this area.

1 Among the earliest of the spring callers is the chorus frog (boreal chorus frog). This tiny frog has a distinct dry trill that sounds like running your finger over a comb. If you happen to see one (good luck!) look for three stripes along its back.

2 Also early on are the southern leopard frogs, beautiful green frogs with big brown spots. Frogs have clammy skin, and most stay close to water, but after breeding in spring leopard frogs can be found roaming far into dry, grassy uplands. They are very common. Their call is often described as the sound made by rubbing your hand over an inflated balloon – a rubbery uh, uh, uh...

3 Another early frog is the northern spring peeper. These thumb-nail-sized sprites with a thin X tattooed on their backs have a rather spotty distribution in our area. We don't hear them on our farm, but Delta Lister gets them on PSU's Natural History Reserve. The Audubon center in Joplin and the Spring River Wildlife Area east of Crestline have them too. They indeed "peep" like a chick, but much, much more loudly – it's amazing how much sound comes from such a little tike in a cold puddle. They can "throw their voice" so you can be standing very near, looking hard, and still not see them. They inhabit low, wooded areas.

4 A week or so after the previous species the ubiquitous American toads start calling. They have a loud, ringing trill that extends ten seconds or more. It's a very pleasant sound, but it doesn't take many toads calling at once to set up quite a cacophony.

"Deafening" is perhaps too strong a term, but not by much.

5 About the same time listen for tree frogs. (In this area they're the Cope's gray tree frog). They have a toad-like trill, but it's much shorter in duration, three to four seconds, and not quite as robust. These are those quarter-size frogs that adhere to your window pane when a nearby lightbulb is attracting moths. (I've seen some pretty fat tree frogs with moth wings sticking out of their mouths. How these tubbies manage to continue to stick to the glass I don't know). They can change colors, bright green to a camouflaged grey.

6 Never abundant in a given area, but rather widespread are northern crawfish frogs, so-called because they often inhabit crawfish burrows and other small holes in open habitat. These large dark-gray frogs with abundant spots render a deep snore from pools of water. They are declining in numbers and are designated a Species In Need of Conservation (SINC). Cindy and I are fortunate in having a few on our farm. They call for only a few days and not every night. Pretty secretive.

7 As temperatures warm in April the Blanchard's cricket frogs start calling. These are small, dark, warty frogs with a triangle between their eyes. The call sounds like small stones being rapidly struck together – "click-click-click..."

8 Finally, the big boys of summer, the bullfrogs. They are the last in the line of singers with their lazy, deep "jug-o-rum," and banjo-like "tung! tung!" Though they come late to the show they can be heard all summer, unlike most of the other anurans, and are giant enough to endanger small children (not really).

None of our frogs and toads are dangerous in any way, although young dogs soon learn not to bite toads, as they do have a mild toxin in their skin. Of course the purpose of all the amorous singing are the masses and strings of gelatinous eggs which you can sometimes spot if you look carefully. Our anurans, like morel mushrooms, spring wildflowers and warblers, are a gift of spring. Hope you can get out and enjoy them. (Match numbers with photos on Page 4.)

April Meeting
Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Yates 102
Pittsburg State Univ
Presentation

April 27 — "Urban Ecology - A Planner's Chance", by Tony Robyn, Asst. Director, Planning Dev. & Neighborhood Services, Joplin, will present the city's recovery efforts and urban ecology principles woven through multiple projects. Robyn has 20 years of experience in project planning.

To receive an e-newsletter:
send your e-mail address to
Cindy Ford, Editor.

HAPPENINGS IN SOUTHEAST KANSAS

HIGHLIGHTS SPERRY-GALLIGAR AUDUBON GENERAL MEETING

Birds spotted were Wood Duck, Roadrunner (in public library parking lot), Brown Thrasher, Fish Crows, among others. Refreshments tonight were provided by Mary Kilcher and Alice Rauniker.

There will be a March for Science in Joplin on April 22 (Earth Day), at 11 a.m., at Spiva Park.

A special exhibit by Chihuly will be featured at Crystal Bridges from June 3 to August 14.

Another reminder of the Wings 'n Wetlands Festival in Great Bend, April 28-30.

There will be an election of next year's officers at the April general meeting. Nominated are

President: Wayne Bockelman

Vice President: Christine Brodsky

Treasurer: Liz Mangle

Secretary: Megan Corrigan

2017 PSU Nature Reach Summer Day Camps

June 26-30, 2017 9am-12pm each day; Parent Open House: June 30th at 11:30am
(Registration Deadline May 19, 2016, but we fill quickly!)

Cost: \$70

Who: Students who have completed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade (15 student maximum)

Where: PSU Natural History Reserve (1053 S. 180th, Pittsburg, KS 66762)

Students receive hands-on learning, outside play, daily snacks, interaction with live animals, and much more!

Contact: Delia Lister, Director of Nature Reach (620) 235-4727 or via email:

dlister@pittstate.edu

Co-sponsored by Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter. If you would like to help, contact Delia.

Mary & Brian Kranker Capture White Pelicans on Film

"A flock of American White Pelicans were seen on April 2, 2017 north of Ft. Scott, KS. While traveling on Hwy. 69 the birds were spotted on a pond one mile north of the Hammond, KS exit on the east side of Hwy. 69. There were 30 - 40 of the pelicans. We were able to get some great pictures of the beautiful birds. The pelicans have a knot on the top of their beak indicating it is mating season. We also saw some of these majestic birds in flight!"

**Sightings.....**

Pic of the Month
by
Emmett Sullivan

**Indian paintbrush**

Indian paintbrush is found on native prairies in southeast Kansas. It is selective in location since it is semi-parasitic on some plants in its surroundings.

Send your newsletter articles, bird sightings, and nature notes to C. Ford by May 10.

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

For first-time National Audubon membership, send \$20.00 and become a member of both organizations, receive 6 copies of Audubon Magazine annually and 8 copies of Sperry-Galligar Newsletter. Please make your check to: Sperry-Galligar Audubon.

____ YES I wish to become a FIRST-TIME member of National Audubon and Sperry-Galligar Audubon. (\$20.00).

For only local or renewal membership, send \$15.00 for membership of 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.

Mail to:

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
816 E. Atkinson Ave
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762**

Please Print



Name _____

Address _____

City _____

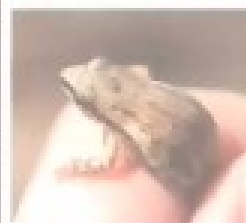
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e-mail address _____

**Events &
Miscellany**

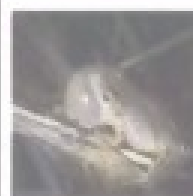


**Common Frogs in
Southeast Kansas**



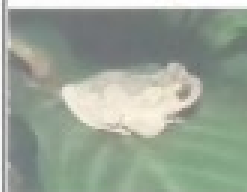
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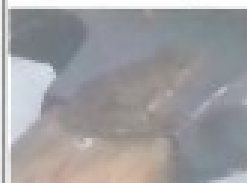
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**Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society
Newsletter**

816 Atkinson Ave.
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.)
7:00 pm to 9 pm, in Room 102, Yates Hall.

PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS.

Refreshments served. Guests welcome.



Visit our website:

<http://sperry-galligar.com/>

**Attention All
Members**

Pay membership dues in September. 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.