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News From the Flock, Vol. 2017 Issue 8

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

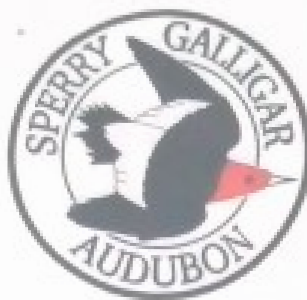
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NEWS FROM THE FLOCK...

Newsletter of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

Sperry- Galligar
Audubon Chapter
Officers 2017 - 2019

President:

Wayne Bockelman

Vice President:

Christine Brodsky

Secretary

Megan Corrigan

Treasurer

Liz Mangie

Newsletter Editor

Cindy Ford

cford@gus.pittstate.edu

Nov/Dec 2017

VOLUME 2017 ISSUE 11

Neosho Wildlife Area gets Facelift

Saturday, November 18 was heavily overcast, chilly, windy, and rainy—perfect for ducks—and—the day that the Neosho State Wildlife Area, St. Paul, dedicated the renovation of its wetland areas. This was the culmination of a 10-year program – with actual earth-moving occurring over the last year and a half. A complex amalgam of matching grants and forms of contributions and the dedicated work of KDWPT, Ducks Unlimited, and many other conservation groups -including Audubon- contributed to the success of this project.

The refuge has provided habitat for waterfowl for many years, but the management of the area has been labor intensive and expensive. Water had to be pumped from the Neosho River to Flat Rock Creek then pumped again to a single basin on the area. From there water flowed through various control structures to other shallow basins. Because the pumps are crucial to the process, staff had to check the pumps in

the morning and in the evening nearly every day—rain or shine during waterfowl-hunting season.

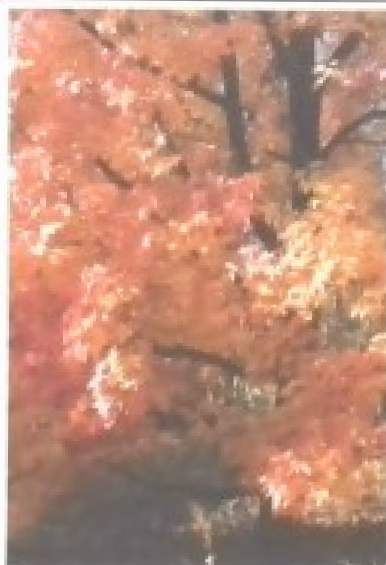
The current project resulted in the ability to pump directly from the river into a number of different basins ("pools"), including controlling the rate of flow. Pools and their surrounding levees and water control structures were reconfigured for maximum effectiveness in attracting migrating and overwintering waterfowl, and parking lots were constructed that allow more efficient access to the various wetlands. Thousands of yards of underground pipes were also laid to allow for strategic movement of water. Overall this popular state waterfowl area now provides even better and more cost-effective waterfowl habitat. **Steve Ford**



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

Dec 7 — "Should I Stay or Should I Go? The Effects Habitat and Behavior have on Salamander Movement", by Dr. Britt Ousterhout (Post Doctoral Fellow at Univ. of Arkansas) . Although most animals live near where they were born, some disperse, moving long distances away. Britt will talk about ongoing work to determine why some animals move.

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



Photos by C. Ford



6:00 Board Meeting Highlights

Megan Corrigan, Secretary

Attending: Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Christine Brodsky, Megan Corrigan, Cindy & Steve Ford, Delia Lister, Bob & Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum,

Minutes: Read, approved.

Treasurer's Report (Liz): Checking account balance-\$7061.64; We received a thank you letter from the Houston Audubon for donating to their recovery efforts.

Members are paying dues.

Programs: December 7 – Should I stay or should I go? The effects habitat and behavior have on salamander movement, by Dr. Britt Ousterhout (Post Doctoral Fellow at University of Arkansas)

January 25 - Local habitat impacts on bird communities in Kansas and Missouri: A joint talk by Pittsburg State biology graduate students

Refreshments: Thank you, Mavis and Ray. Need volunteer for December.

Birdseed Sale: Will be held Saturday, December 9th. Seeking donations of crafts and baked goods. Need volunteers to help with table inside and truck outside. Bob will e-mail members closer to the date. Blue Ribbon will donate a trailer again this year. Barn owl houses will be available, made by Ray Benner.

Publicity: Morning Sun had it on the front page this time. KRPS mentioned it.

T-shirts: Steve Ford designed an eye-catching T-shirt and they are available for \$10.

Donations: A beautiful book of first day issue nature stamps was given to Diane that she would like to get into the hands of someone who will appreciate it. Discussed whether it could be part of a fundraiser. Also, Steve and Cindy are talking to folks at KDWP about a possible project at their new headquarters where we may be able

Financial Statement

Liz Mangile, Treasurer

Nov 2017

Beginning balance-----\$7560.90

Debits

Newsletter-----\$ 7.32

T-shirts-----\$472.50

Dinner for speaker-----\$ 19.44

KRPS advertising-----\$200.00

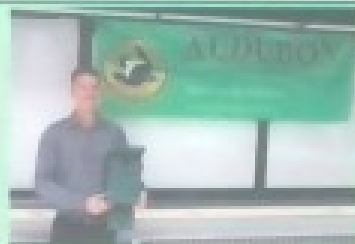
Total-----\$699.26

Credits

Members dues-----\$105.00

Ending balance-----\$6966.64

October Presenter: Cole Morrison



Cole Morrison of CDL has been installing solar panels in the four state area for the past two years, and he shared some insights about where the industry is today and where it's going. Solar panel prices have come down signif-

icantly in the last decade, making it reasonable for many homeowners to recoup the money they invest in a system through savings on their energy bill. A 30% federal tax credit that is in place through 2019 can also help offset the cost.

However, some parts of the country are very supportive of solar installations and other areas and power companies are less so. Homeowners who install solar systems can generate a lot of their own energy and, on sunny days, even more energy than they need. They can then sell this back to the power company under a net metering agreement and get a credit against their bill.

Power companies in Kansas can set a net metering cap above which they will not credit residential customers for generated electricity. According to Morrison, Westar has set this cap at 15,000 watts, while Empire District has set it at 100,000. Furthermore, Westar has sought approval from the Kansas Corporation Commission to charge a higher base rate to customers who install solar, arguing that the fixed cost of maintaining an electric system doesn't change when customers generate power off the grid and those costs should be shared equally. Westar plans to put forth a new fee structure early next year, making the future somewhat uncertain.

Also contributing to uncertainty is whether the federal government will impose an import tax on solar panels. Most solar panels are imported and cost less than the American manufactured solar panels. Two American companies have complained to the Federal Trade Commission that they cannot compete with the price of imported solar panels and the Commission is expected to recommend for or against an import tariff in November. This has put a lot of solar projects on pause, unable to forecast the price point of panels several months out. But Morrison pointed out that whatever complications might arise, the demand for solar installations is likely to continue to increase because people are attracted to the idea of a degree of energy independence and the technology is available. He noted that solar panels have improved in efficiency and decreased in price. Batteries that can store solar power for later use are heading in the same direction, making the prospect of solar energy more and more attractive.

Megan Corrigan

Thanks to Mavis and Ray Benner for the refreshments.

HAPPENINGS IN SOUTHEAST KANSAS

WILDCAT GLADES CONSERVATION & AUDUBON CENTER
IN TRANSITION

You may have heard that Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center in Joplin, MO is struggling for stability of operation into the future. The beautiful nature center has been open and active for several years but faces some changes. Chris Pistole, Naturalist at the nature center, sent this statement about the situation.

"Former members of the Advisory Board and volunteers of Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center, with local business leaders and stakeholders, have formed a concerned citizens'

group to address the recent announcement of the eventual withdrawal of the National Audubon Society (NAS) from Center operations. This group is working with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the City of Joplin to explore future possibilities in Center stewardship.

The goal of this group is to gather public input, and to create a viable proposal to continue the operation of the Center in the fashion to which the community has become accustomed. By a memorandum of understanding which outlines the partnership responsibilities, NAS must give MDC 120 days after October 31, 2017, to reach a decision as to whether they wish to take ownership of the building. During this period, the citizens group will research public opinion, financial and administrative options, and informally proposed opportunities for the Center to continue operations and educational programming.

A public forum with invited representatives from stakeholder groups such as Ozark Gateway Audubon Chapter and Missouri Master Naturalists, as well as MDC and NAS, will be held on Tuesday, November 28 from 6 - 8 pm at the Joplin Public Library. The public is invited to attend and share their thoughts on a positive path forward for the Center."

SPERRY-GALLIGAR AUDUBON CHAPTER MEMBERS
HELP WITH ECO-MEET

Bob and Liz Mangile, Mavis Benner, Emmett Sullivan, and Steve and Cindy Ford served as volunteers in the Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism-sponsored event. For the event, high school student teams compete in four categories: written exam, plant identification, wildlife identification, and nature interpretation. The winners of the regional competitions then compete at the state level. For several years, Jennifer Rader, Schermerhorn Nature Center, and Mike Rader, Education Specialist for Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism, have facilitated the program held at Greenbush (west of Girard).



Emmett Sullivan's Pic of the Month

My photo of the month is a frost flower photo. Frost flowers are commonly found on white crown beard, also called Frost weed, and a few other plants in the fall with the first heavy frost. When it warms up they will just melt away, this one was taken at 8:41am, Oct. 31-2017.

Sightings.....



Is this really a
bird???



Delia Lister took
the photo in the
Amazon
Rainforest.

Do you know
the name of this
bird?

Send your newsletter
articles, bird
sightings, and
nature notes to
C. Ford by Jan. 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 _____

Phone _____

e-mail address _____

**Events &
Miscellany**



BIRD SEED SALE TIME

The Sperry-Galligar Chapter Bird Seed Sale will be held at Meadow Brook Mall: **Saturday, December 9, 9:00—4:00.** The truck with seed will be on the west side of the parking lot and there will be a booth inside the north doors of the mall. Donated crafts & baked goods are appreciated. Drop them by the inside booth & buy some other goodies while you are there.

Christmas Bird Count Scheduled

The annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count will be held **Friday, December 29.** This is a departure from our previous date due to a change in our meeting place hours of operation.

Meet at the gas station in Scammon, KS at 7:00 for instructions for the count. The day-long survey is divided among the participants. If you would like details, please contact Steve Ford at sford@gus.pittstate.edu or call at 620-632-4280.



NEW SPERRY-GALLIGAR T-SHIRTS

Steve Ford will have Sperry-Galligar t-shirts at the meeting December 5th...only \$10.00.

If you have not paid dues for the year, see Liz Mangile at the December meeting.

**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.