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News From the Flock, Vol. 2019 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 2018 - 2020

President:

Steve Ford

Vice President:

Christine Brodsky

Secretary

David Hollie

Treasurer

Liz Mangile

Newsletter Editor

Cindy Ford

cford@gus.pittstate.edu

Apr 2019

VOLUME 2019 ISSUE 4

Death in the Afternoon

Yes, yes I know – yet another newsletter article on killing animals for fun (yawn). At least this one starts dropping names right off: Ernest Hemingway. The title refers to his non-fiction book on bullfighting, one of the blood sports he loved wherein the bulls die always, the horses commonly, and the matadors occasionally.

The charismatic, Nobel-Prize-winner is an icon of robust outdoor adventure, especially if there is a gun and bottle involved. Last year near Yellowstone we passed a bar with a sign that boasted "DRINK WHERE HEMINGWAY DRANK." Cindy wanted to stop, but I held out, hoping for "DRINK WHERE HARPER LEE DRANK." Why revel in killing African big game and Gulf Stream marlins when I could warm a stool in tribute to a manual on dispatching mockingbirds?! Strangely we never found such a place. If you really want a load of the Hemingway-esque, visit one of our favorite restaurants - yes, Hemingway's - in Springfield's Bass Pro Shop. It's a virtual museum of photos, fish, and stuffed heads-with-horns – really big heads. (I refuse to sit under the Cape buffalo.)

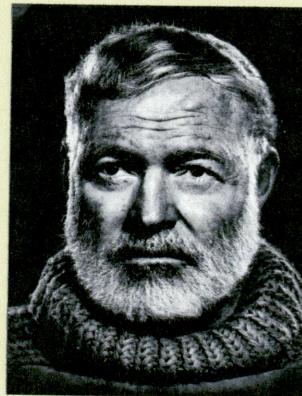
I've been a member of the Pittsburg Hunter Education group as long as I've been with Audubon. We admonish young would-be hunters to shoot only what is to be eaten (or otherwise used). "Wanton waste" is illegal and unethical. (Don't ask me to defend "varmint"-shooting, but then let's not talk about releasing neutered feral cats or fox hunting with beautiful horses.) EH said "I like to shoot a rifle, and I like to kill . . ." and indeed he shot prairie dogs while he was driving down the highway, shot sea birds from his fishing boat, and even machine-gunned

sharks. "Very exciting" remarked one of his fishing companions. To be fair, this last was in attempts, usually unsuccessful, to keep the sharks from stripping marlins he was trying to reel in, though I don't suppose it mattered to the marlin.

Context is key, isn't it? When I was a kid I would occasionally shoot rats at the dump with a replica of a black-powder Civil War pistol. I made the lead balls myself. The loud blast of the gun, the hard kick, the copious smoke . . . yes, very exciting. And no one loved the wild animals I used for target practice, which were somehow more fun than shooting tin cans.

John Audubon was a crack shot, probably killing more songbirds than anyone of his day in order to mount them in poses for his paintings. Today he would be arrested for it. Would we bail him out and invite him to join the Audubon Club? My guess is yes, as his killing resulted in one of the most beautiful tributes to the wonder of birds ever created. Context. Funds generat-

ed from hunting, that is shooting birds and mammals for sport, have paid the freight, mostly, for wildlife conservation in this country for generations, wildlife that includes not just game species, but great numbers of protected non-game species as well. (Again, in fairness, early Auduboners saved the great egret from extinction via over hunting).



Hemingway lived large as they say, better known by many for his macho hook 'n bullet gusto than for his stark writing style. But he was complicated and flawed, words that can be used in many of today's regard for the natural world.

Steve Ford

April Meeting
Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Yates 102, PSU
Pittsburg, KS
Presentation

Apr 25 — Katy Holmer, Natural Resources Steward, Prairie State Park will talk about, "Birds, Bison, Butterflies, and Badgers: Stewardship at Prairie State Park" Over the last four years, park staff has intensified its focus on stewardship projects such as invasive species management, research, and monitoring. Katy will discuss some of these projects.

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

6:00 Board Meeting Highlights David Hollie, Secretary

Attending: Mavis Benner, Wayne Bockelman, Christine Brodsky, Steve and Cindy Ford, David Hollie, Delia Lister, Bob and Liz Mangile, Diane McCallum, Mary Jo Meier, Emmett Sullivan
Treasurer's Report – \$4,021.53

Minutes from February board meeting – read and approved
Refreshments – this month's refreshments were provided by

Donna Smith, thank you!

Next year's refreshments – we will have a refreshments "chair person" in charge of making sure refreshments are provided each month

Nature reach race water station – SGA's table will be at the Bryant Health Center

Earth day table – April 20th, Pittsburg will be having a Earth Day celebration. SGA will have a table with our banner, brochures, and t-shirts. We will also have one in the oval on campus on April 22nd

Planting at Wildlife HQ – tentative date to plant wildflowers around the headquarters: April 13

Slate of officers for next year:

President – Steve Ford

Vice/Program - Mary Jo Meier

Secretary – Christine Brodsky

Treasurer – Liz Mangile

Thanks is overdue to **Bob Mangile** for his assistance in taking presenter pictures at each meeting, along with club activity shots. In my memory, Bob has not missed one meeting.

Financial Statement...Liz Mangile, Treasurer April 2019

Beginning balance-----\$4024.09

Credits

Bird houses, shirts and memberships-----\$ 85.00

Debits

Newsletter-----\$ 2.56

Ending balance-----\$4106.53

Thanks for the goodies...
Sharon and Joe Kennedy

March Presenter: Amy Hammesfahr



Bats are often thought of as a group of small, dark, mysterious creatures that scare people in caves. However, bats are incredibly diverse! From the bumblebee bat that weighs less than a penny (and is arguably the smallest mammal in the world) to the golden-crowned flying fox that weighs two pounds and has a wing span of more than five feet, bats are an underappreciated group of organisms. And at March's club meeting, it was Amy Hammesfahr's goal to give us a peak into the wonderful world of bats. Of all the mammalian groups, bats are

among the least understood by the general public.

Bat myths are numerous, and some have been around for centuries. Amy busted many of these myths: 1) Vampire bats: only three species of bats drink blood (none in the US), and it's important to note that they don't "suck" blood, they lap it up with the help of anticoagulants in their saliva. 2) Bats are not just mice with wings. They are more closely related to humans than to rodents! 3) Bats are not birds! They give birth to live young and produce milk for their babies just like humans and other mammals. 4) Not all bats have rabies. **Only about 6% of all bats submitted for rabies testing are positive for rabies.** 5) Bats are not blind, they can see very well. However, since they usually hunt when light levels are low, they rely heavily echolocation for navigation. Many bat species even have better vision than humans. So next time somebody tells you you're as blind as a bat, you can thank them for the compliment!

Bats provide many important ecosystem services such as keeping insect populations in check (including mosquitoes) and pollinating important foods like agave and cocoa (for chocolate). It is estimated that bats provide billions of dollars of value to humans. Unfortunately, bats face many serious threats such as habitat fragmentation and habitat loss. Perhaps the most critical threat that North American bats are facing right now is white-nose syndrome. **This fungal disease was first introduced to the US in 2006 in a New York cave. A white-nose syndrome infection can cause a bat to arouse during the winter and start hunting for insects or fruit in a frozen landscape. Even before the infected bats begin to awaken, the disease causes them to increase their metabolic rate and use twice as much energy during hibernation. Over 6 million bats have been killed by white-nose syndrome as it is spreading across the US and Canada.**



So, what can we do to help bats? Twenty-two species of bats have been observed in Kansas and Missouri, several of which are protected species. Amy gave several suggestions for making life easier on our local bats. 1) Install a bat house to provide roosting space 2) Plant more native plants! Native plant species provide homes for native insects, which in turn will help our bats. 3). Contact your state representative to push for better wind energy methods.

David Hollie

HAPPENINGS IN SOUTHEAST KANSAS

Emmett's Pic of the Month



Wild Ginger
(*Asarum canadense*)
Birthwort Family

Found in rich woodland habitat where flowers are at ground level under leaves. Pollinated by ants and beetles.

Root used for ginger flavoring.

Monarch Butterflies Show Increase in Population

"At the end of last month, Mexican officials announced that the overall population of monarch butterflies wintering in central Mexico was up 144 percent over the previous year. Researchers found the butterflies occupying 15 acres (6 hectares) of pine and fir forests in the mountains of Michoacan and Mexico states, compared to only 6 acres (2 hectares) the winter prior. The monarch butterfly population, like that of other insects, fluctuates widely depending on a variety of factors, but scientists say the recoveries after each big dip tend to be smaller, suggesting a decline in the number migrating from Canada and the United States. This winter's population figure, however, was the largest since 2006-2007."

"Chip Taylor, director of Monarch Watch and an ecology professor at the University of Kansas, who runs a monarch tagging program, said that established colonies normally have butterflies. But he knew it was going to be a better year when others were spotted.

'When the population really grows, they'll see monarchs where they don't see them in normal years,' Taylor said.

On a recent afternoon the air filled with monarchs as the midday sun sliced through the thick forest, leading some of the butterflies to take flight. Others lay on the ground after reaching the end of their life cycle."

Excerpts taken from (<https://myconnection.com/article/world/>)



Sightings.....



Looking for Warblers



Prothonotary Warbler



Black and White Warbler



American Redstart

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 _____
Phone _____
e-mail address _____

Events &
Miscellany



EARTH DAY
Celebrations on April 20

Pritchett Pavilion
Miners' Park
(2nd & Broadway)
downtown Pittsburg
11:00—3:00

EARTH DAY
Celebrations on April 22

PSU Campus Oval
11:00—3:00

SPERRY-GALLIGAR FIELD TRIP

Neosho Wildlife Area

Planned for **Sat., April 27, 8:00 a.m.**
Meet at NE Parking Area, Home Depot
Or
Check Station at Neosho Wildlife Area

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.