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News From the Flock, Vol. 2022 Issue 2

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

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NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

*** BE SURE TO CHECK OUT ALL 8 PAGES

October 2022 / Issue 2

OFFICERS

President
Mary Jo Meier
Vice President
Andrew George
Secretary
Megan Corrigan
Treasurer
Liz Mangile

Board Support

Newsletter Editor
Cindy Ford
cford@pittstate.edu

Web Master
Bob Mangile
sperry-galligar.com
Facebook
Megan Corrigan
<http://Facebook.com/SperryGalligarAudubon>

Membership
Diane McCallum

Next Program

Thursday, 7:00
October 27
Yates 102
PSU Campus

"Fantastic Birds
and Where to
Find Them" by
Mary and Alex
Marine,
Pittsburg State
University.

Delia Lister Appointed to Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Commission



There are seven Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) commissioners located throughout Kansas and as of July, Delia Lister was recommended by Secretary Brad Loveless and approved by Governor Laura Kelly to be the commissioner from the southeast region. Most commissioners serve for at least four years, and often more depending on the pleasure of the current Secretary. The commission sets regulations regarding hunting and fishing (bag limits, etc.), as well as regulations for state parks; it receives input from the public at the seven annual meetings throughout the state, plus letters, emails, etc., as well as input from state wildlife and fisheries biologists and game wardens; and advises the Secretary on state conservation issues.

Traditionally commission members are men with strong ties to the hunting and fishing community. This hidebound tradition is slowly being transformed to better reflect the changing interests and attitudes of a changing demographic. Delia is not the first woman asked to serve, but for the first time in KDWP history there are now two women on the commission. She is the first commissioner to our knowledge whose background is strongly academic, biological, and educational.

She says she's currently riding a steep learning curve, and has been particularly impressed with the depth and breadth of knowledge and dedicated activities of Kansas's wildlife and fisheries biologists. Current wildlife priorities discussed by the commission include increasing concerns with chronic wasting disease in deer, and a declining turkey population.

Delia has both a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Biology from Pittsburg State University and has begun a doctorate program with St. Louis University, has been the Director of the Biology Department's Nature Reach field biology outreach program for 16 years, will be President of Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE) as of January 1st, and is active in the National Association for Interpretation (NAI). She is also a long-serving board member of Sperry-Galligar Audubon, and is a past president of our chapter.

Congratulations: Commissioner Lister. We look forward to your continuing contributions to Kansas conservation and education.

Board Minutes...Megan Corrigan

29 September 2022, Pitt State, Yates Hall 102

Attended: Mary Jo Meier, Andrew George, Steve Ford, Cindy Ford, Diane McCallum, Delia Lister, Bob Mangile, Liz Mangile, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan

Minutes from the April meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report – We have \$5038.87 in checking.

Publicity – For this meeting flyers were hung, it was in the Morning Sun, and announced on KRPS.

Fall programs report- October 27 – Mary and Alex Marine – Fantastic Birds and Where to Find Them
December 1 – Jenn Rader from KDWP – The Kansas Birding Trail and Wildlife Viewing

May picnic – Mary Hines just came back from the Amazon with wonderful photos. Mary Jo will ask if she can present at our picnic. We may again need to move it to a week earlier. If so, Bob needs to know that right away to change the reservation at Homer Cole.

Bird Walks –Next one- October 8, 8:00 am at Wilderness Park.

Bylaws – Wayne and Mary Jo will meet to talk about possible updates for the bylaws.

National Audubon Renewals Alert – Despite early solicitations, National Audubon only counts your donation as a renewal if you have less than six months left on your current membership.

Budget – Members are asked to brainstorm about the budget. Are our current fundraising events meeting our needs? Do we need more T-shirts?

Treasurer Report...Liz Mangile

Financial Statement

September – October

Beginning Balance **\$5,038.87**

Credits

Membership/Shirts \$ 114.00

Birdhouses/Donations 60.00

\$ 174.00

Debits

Program Posters \$ 106.05

Treats for bird walks 60.00

\$ 166.05

Ending Balance **\$5,046.82**

Get out to watch birds this fall. It an excellent time to enjoy the cooler weather, to see and hear the increased activity of birds in the area, and to see migrants passing through.





Happenings in Southeast KS

Predator and Prey



Diane McCallum

It was a beautiful October day, so I went out into our front yard to see what was on our sedum. Each fall, the sedum bursts out with lovely pink blooms and all types of insects flock there. We get bees, beetles, wasps, moths and butterflies of all kinds. It's a lot of fun to go outside to see what's new.

On this particular day, the sedum was full of mostly skippers

and moths, although there were a few bees and flies. I took a few turns around the plants to see what was there. Then, as I was trying to identify one of the skippers (not an easy task!), I noticed something different: it was a larger bug, with sort of a flat gray body and long legs. There was a large black spot on the back of its body and it had red antennae. I had seen one earlier in the year on our bird bath, so I knew what it was: an assassin bug. This one had a ridge on its back that looks like half of a notched cog, so it's called a wheel bug. It was about 3/4" to 1" long.

Since it's called an assassin bug, I assumed it wasn't there for the flowers, so I waited and watched. Sure enough, a corn earworm moth landed on that group of blooms and proceeded to feast away, while the assassin bug was motionless. The moth never really seemed aware of the assassin bug ... until the assassin lived up to its name: it moved forward slowly and then grabbed the moth! The moth struggled, but it was too late.

I have to admit that I'm a little squeamish and didn't stay to watch the assassin bug have its own feast, but I was fascinated that I'd actually been able to see it catch its meal. I've never seen anything like that before!

Nature in action.

Diane McCallum

Sightings...



Emmett's Pics



Blue-eyed Grass

They are native to Kansas and can be found in some woodlands, moist tallgrass prairies, and also may be cultivated as an ornamental.

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

cford@pittstate.edu



Red-breasted Nuthatch
Photo taken Oct. 2, 2022
Bob Mangile's feeder

"The bird has been a regular at our feeder for quite a while. They are fast moving--grab & fly--birds but it kept visiting my feeder like clockwork, back and forth, so I sat there with my camera at the ready." Bob Mangile

FOX PHOTOS FROM TERRAPIN RIDGE

Kathy Fox is sharing some of her photos that she has taken at their country home, Terrapin Ridge, near Pittsburg.



While birding for the October Big Day and taking the kayak out to look for waterfowl, I came upon this BIG whitetail buck getting a drink from the pit! I think I was more surprised to see this beauty than he was to see me! He let me watch him for awhile and then clambered back up the steep side of the strip pit.



Every day in October we look at the hummingbird feeder to see if we still have a visitor! So far we still do! Taken on October 8th, a photo memory to get us through the winter!

September Program Synopsis by Megan Corrigan

Kansas Flyways and Motus

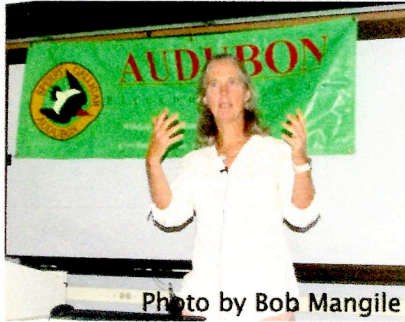


Photo by Bob Mangile

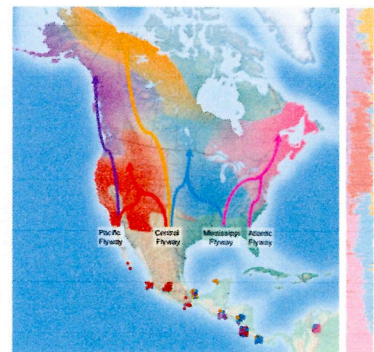
Dr. Alice Boyle studies birds, but she is not satisfied with the current technology available. She wants to know more about the movements of birds. We know a lot about the movement of populations of birds, but not much about the movement of individual birds, and that's what Boyle thinks can reveal key information that can be used to inform conservation efforts.

Kansas a great place for birding, Boyle says, because the state is the border between east and west bird populations. We can see two species each of meadowlark, towhee and bunting. Likewise, north meets south, and we can see both Carolina and Black-capped chickadees. Warblers pass through Kansas during migration on the Mississippi flyway, and further west, Quivira is a Wetland of Global Importance, providing a stopover for shorebirds migrating between continents. Some of our summer birds fly further south for our winter, while we get other birds, like Harris sparrows, Tree sparrows and for whom balmy Kansas IS their southern winter destination.

But to really understand what birds need, it would be helpful to be able to study birds on an individual level. We know that we have meadowlarks both in the summer and winter, but do we know if they are the same birds, or different ones? We may know that the nest in the tree in our yard gets used every year, but is it by the same bird? Up to now, unless you could band birds or analyze stable isotopes in the feathers this was hard to determine. Enter Motus Wildlife Tracking System!

With the Motus system, researchers can attach radio tags to animals and track where they go. This is not new technology, but it has generally been used with hand-held antennae that have a limited range. It was time consuming and frustrating to track the tagged animals. With Motus, however, there are towers that track the tags 24/7. This program started in Canada in 2014, and now has more than 1500 towers, including, thanks to the efforts of Boyle and Kansas Motus, twenty towers in Kansas and more on the way. The closest station to PSU is in Greenbush. The hope is to have a tower in every county in eastern Kansas.

Motus can track birds, mammals, and even insects. Researchers can collect data while they sleep. The tags ping the towers and the towers keep track of the data. The tower can detect tags up to 15 miles away. This technology will allow for studies of space use by threatened populations, connectivity between breeding populations, and variation in local populations due to dispersal. This movement data will be crucial to understanding what areas need to be conserved. So many questions that we have not been able to answer about birds are now open to study. Kansas Motus invites individuals to get involved by sponsoring a tower or adopting a bird.



Bicycling with Butterflies

We were treated to a special presentation prior to the regular September Sperry-Galligar meeting. Sara Dykman returned to let us know how her butterfly adventure had gone after her tour.



1.6 billion individual milkweed plants. That was the one thing Sara Dykman wanted us to get out of her recent presentation. 1.6 billion milkweed plants. That is what is needed to support the eastern monarch butterfly population along its migration route.

When Sara Dykman came through Pittsburg in 2017, she had already biked north to Canada with the monarch butterflies and was on her way back south, along with the butterfly stragglers, to see them safely back to their overwintering ground. Along the way, she gave presentations, raised awareness, and inspired appreciation both of her own adventure and of the monarch butterfly.

In September, 2022 Sara came back through Pittsburg, this time on a motorcycle and now promoting a book, *Bicycling with Butterflies*, she wrote about her journey. What I remember from Sara's 2017 talk is that there were many days when she rode all day and saw no monarchs, and how frustrated she was to hear from folks all along her route that there used to be so many more. Since her epic bicycle ride, the monarch population has attracted attention in some pretty high places.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service announced

in 2020 that the monarch butterfly does meet the criteria to be listed under the Endangered Species Act, but that at this time it is not a priority. They will not be listed. In July 2022 the International Union for the Conservation of Nature added the monarch butterfly to their red list of endangered species. So far monarchs have no legislative protection, but they have captured hearts and minds.

Sara's current talk and book are as much about the people she met who are trying to help the monarchs, as they are about the butterflies. She talks about Nadia, from Columbia, Missouri whose seemingly unkempt yard, full of milkweed, sends rhizomes over into her neighbor's tidy yard and how Nadia has convinced the neighbor to let some of the milkweed stay, for the monarchs. Sara tries to describe being at the intersection of anger and hope – anger about how few monarchs are left, and hope that, if we all plant milkweed, their numbers can recover.

Sara is doing her part. She has trained and is raising money to pay women in Michoacan to count streaming monarchs three times a day to collect data for Monarch Watch, and plans to expand that project. When the wintering monarchs in Mexico provide economic opportunities to the local population, there is less incentive to log the forest. Sara hopes that we will also do our part. She suggests we plant milkweed, even in small spaces. She hopes we will talk to people and help them understand why milkweed is so important (hint: it is the only plant the monarch caterpillars can eat). She encourages folks to find out more about Monarch Watch and their citizen science programs. And she welcomes any support for her ongoing Counting Monarchs project in Michoacan. We can't all ride a bike 10,000 miles through three countries. We can't all write a book to spread the word. But we can all do something to help the monarchs, and to get us closer to the 1.6 billion individual milkweed plants they need.

WRITINGS OF EDWIN WAY TEALE

Steve Ford

I think I read *A Naturalist Buys An Old Farm* some four decades ago, and recently re-read it. It's delightful, and I want to tell you about it if you are not familiar it.

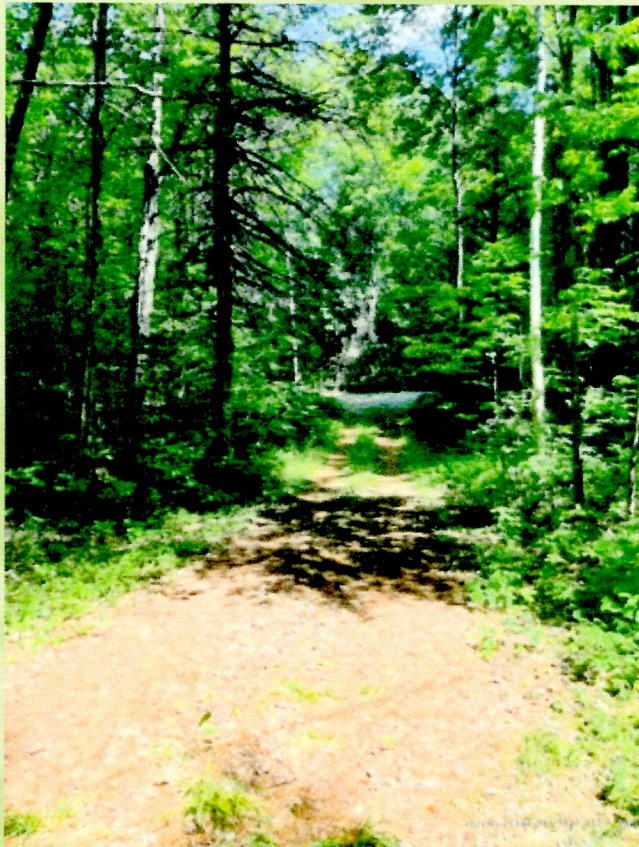
Edwin Way Teale first published the book in 1974. Teale was a Pulitzer Prize-winning nature writer who is perhaps best known for his four-volume series wherein he documents extended road trips across the USA in each of the four seasons in the 1950s and 60s. A while back I re-read *North With The Spring*, and will get to the others before long. His *Old Farm* is considered by many to be his best - and has become a classic, even though, for a "classic," it is not really that old.

Teale and his wife, Nellie, also a naturalist (both now deceased) purchased a 130-acre farm in 1959 in Connecticut and moved into a small, but charming house there that was built in 1806. The book covers fifteen years of nature observations on the farm that they named Trailwood.

To say that Teale observed nature is like saying DaVinci painted pictures. From microscopic to astronomic Teale just didn't miss much. Geology, wind, weather, seasons, ecological relationships, subtleties of bird and chipmunk vocalizations, culture, history . . . He kept track of how long it took a red maple limb hung up on a pignut hickory to saw its way to the ground: from February 22, 1967 to March 25, 1969, and then watched the scar on the maple for years after. Do you know how many times you blink for every one blink of an alert woodchuck? Teale does. (I won't keep you in suspense. It's four.)

Of course these are some of the more arcane observations, but it is an example of the depth of seeing of which he is capable - and, yes, interested. The colors, noises, and fragrances of different species of wood burning in his fireplace is included, plus references to Thoreau, Muir, Whitman, Burroughs and others (his writing cabin is a faithful reproduction of Thoreau's at Waldon Pond). He describes butt-to-butt shoving matches between skunks, gray foxes sleeping in hawk nests high in trees, blooming times of wildflowers, stories told in snow by mammal and bird tracks, beavers under the ice, woodcock dances, what intimacies nature reveals when viewed from a long-term writing blind within a large brush pile, etc., etc.

But the book is much more than just a laundry list of observations. It is (from the foreword) ". . . a guidebook to contentment, a how-to book on living well and lightly on the land." Enjoy it slowly, a little at a time. You'll understand why it has become a classic, and will enrich your walks in the woods.



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

For first-time National Audubon membership: send \$20.00 and become a member of both organizations, receive 4 copies of Audubon Magazine annually and 8 copies of Sperry-Galligar Newsletter. Please make your check to: National Audubon Society.

_____ Yes, I wish to become a **FIRST-TIME** member of National Audubon and Sperry-Galligar Audubon. (\$20.00)

For only local renewal membership, send \$15.00 for membership in 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 Audubon Society.

Please print and mail to:

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

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon
Society**

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

Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month...7:00 p.m. to 9 p.m., Room 102, Yates Hall, PSU Campus, Pittsburg, KS.

No meetings in June, July, or August. (November/December meeting date to be announced.)

EVENTS & MISCELLANY

**TIME TO PAY DUES.
SEE LIZ MANGILE.**

**Carly Rowton
wins "50 Bird
Species" pin.**



Photo by Mary Jo Meier



ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS. Pay membership dues in September. Please consider paying local membership dues. Our chapter receives 100% of the local dues only. You can subscribe to both local and national. Either way you get the newsletter.