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News From the Flock, Vol. 2023 Issue 5

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

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NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

May 2023 / Issue 5

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

Membership
Diane McCallum

Next Program

Thursday, 6:00
May 18
Homer Cole Bldg.
Pittsburg, KS

"Searching for the Elusive Spotted Skunk in Kansas" by Christine Brodsky. Find out how baited cameras are used in the study. Learn more about spotted skunk life history and conservation efforts.

SPERRY-GALLIGAR AUDUBON CHAPTER ANNUAL PICNIC

MAY 18, 2023

HOMER COLE COMMUNITY CENTER
3003 N Joplin St, Pittsburg, KS

We will start at 6:00 P.M. We request an RSVP if you plan to attend. SGAS will supply tea and fried chicken for all but request that you bring a side dish, e.g., main dish, dessert or salad, and your own table service. And don't forget to bring a serving utensil for the side dish! Ice will be available, too.

If you plan on attending please email Bob Mangile <rmangile@cox.net> or call 620-231-3117 by May 14th, if possible, to let us know how many will be in your party. We want to order enough Fried Chicken for everyone!

We will have a table set up for the sale of SGAS T-shirts, sweatshirts, bluebird boxes, wren houses and ant moats for hummingbird feeders.

Also, this year we have received a donated *Bird Song Bible*, with illustrations and digital audio from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology of all 750 species of birds that breed in the US. We will have a "silent auction" for this one item. Read about the book here:

<https://bit.ly/3NIVsmR>



Emmett Sullivan sent this photo of common snipe at Neosho Wildlife Area. Can you see at least 3 of them?

Board Minutes...Megan Corrigan

Sperry Galligar Audubon Minutes – 27 April 2023,
Pitt State, Heckert Wells, 3rd floor

Attended: Mary Jo Meier, Mavis Benner, Andrew George, Steve Ford, Cindy Ford, Diane McCallum, Bob Mangile, Liz Mangile, Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Kathy Fox

Minutes from the March meeting were read and approved

Treasurer's Report – We have \$5535.56

Upcoming Events –

Bird Walks (destinations tent.): May 6 – Ford Property; June 6 – Prairie State Park; July 1 – Crawford State Park; August 5 – Neosho Wildlife Area; September 2 – Wilderness Park; October 7 – Schermerhorn Park/SEK Nature Center; November 4 – Bone Creek Lake; December 2 – Shawnee Trail CA

Picnic: May 18 (one week earlier than usual)
Dr. Christine Brodsky wildlife camera project.

Earth Day – This was a successful outreach event. \$164 was raised, and 25 new people joined the email list. An additional 27 people entered our giveaway.

Officers for next year – President – Andy George, Vice President – Megan Corrigan, Secretary – Mary Jo Meier, Treasurer – Liz Mangile.

Picnic – We are accepting reservations for our members-only picnic. Please remember to bring a side dish or dessert and table service.

Bird Walk – For the May 6 bird walk, because it is on private property, participants should meet at Yates and caravan/carpool.

Bird Song Bible – Motion made and approved to include a silent auction for this one item at the picnic.

Attendance: April meeting – 25 May bird walk – 12



Summer Tanager



Treasurer Report...Liz Mangile

Financial Report ... May 2023

Beginning balance-----\$ 5544.56

Credits

Memberships, shirts, ect.-----\$ 191.00

Debits

Newsletter-----\$ 9.00

Ending balance-----\$ 5726.56

May Bird Walk

12 people in attendance at the Ford Farm
May 6, 2023

33 species

Listed by Wayne Bockelman

American Crow
American Goldfinch
Baltimore Oriole
Blue Jay
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Brown Thrasher
Brown-headed Cowbird
Canada Goose
Carolina Chickadee
Carolina Wren
Chipping Sparrow
Downy Woodpecker
Eastern Phoebe
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Great Blue Heron
Great Crested Flycatcher
Indigo Bunting
Least Flycatcher
Northern Cardinal
Northern Parula
Pileated Woodpecker
Prothonotary Warbler
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Red-eyed Vireo
Red-winged Blackbird
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Summer Tanager
Swainson's Thrush
Tufted Titmouse
Warbling Vireo
White-crowned Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Yellow-rumped Warbler

APRIL PROGRAM RECAP ... Megan Corrigan

The Beauty of Brazil



Photo by Bob Mangile

We've heard of birders who have a nemesis bird, a bird they just cannot manage to see, no matter how hard they try. Rick Hines had a nemesis jaguar. He always wanted to see a jaguar in the wild and he went looking – first to Belize, then to Guatemala, then Honduras and then the Brazilian Amazon all to no avail. He saw one jaguar in the Belize City Zoo, but that doesn't count.

He was ready to give up, but decided to give it one last shot by visiting the Brazilian Pantanal, the world's largest seasonal tropical wetland. The Pantanal is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve twenty times larger than the Everglades, and while it is used for grazing cattle, there are no human settlements. It's an intact ecosystem with tremendous biodiversity. During the rainy season, 80% is flooded and the other 20% is trees, so not only do jaguars make their home there, so do over 600 species of birds and 240 other species of mammals.

The journey into the Pantanal starts with 100 miles of dirt road and 125 bridges, some of which are just two parallel planks for the cars tires to stay on. There is dense vegetation on all sides, thick with wood storks, egrets, herons and the photogenic Jabiru stork with its jet-black head and bright red throat. There are water lilies five feet across and strong enough for Monet to take a nap on, and open snouts in the water that belong to caimans trying to cool down. Hines' wife is a gifted photographer and it was a treat to enjoy her amazing photographs.

The group had not gone far when they had a great view of a jaguar from the road, fulfilling Hines' greatest desire, but the guide said, "We are just getting started." Over the next 8 days they saw 35 jaguars, and not just glimpses. They saw jaguars pacing the riverbanks, swimming, hunting caimans, encountering anacondas, crossing rivers with cubs, lazing in the trees, and being tranquilized and measured by scientists. Hines had hit the jaguar jackpot.

Jaguars are top predators in the Pantanal, but the Hines couple also photographed giant river otters, giant anteaters, capybaras, tapirs, agoutis, peccaries, pampas deer, howler monkeys, capuchin monkeys and coatimundis. Jaguars have the strongest jaws of all big cats, so any of these other mammals could be lunch. With so much prey available, it's perhaps not surprising that jaguars in the Pantanal are not known to be aggressive towards humans. Some cattle ranchers say jaguars will prey on cattle, but conservationists say it is rare. What is not in question is that jaguars are thriving in the Pantanal, and if you are looking for one, the Pantanal is the place to start your search. Many thanks to Rick Hines for taking us along on this fascinating journey.

A REAL TREAT, FEEDING MEALWORMS

Last summer I was offered some mealworms to keep and feed the insect eating birds in our yard.

My benefactor fully disclosed what it would take to keep mealworms with his offer. 1) A deep flat container covered with a screen. 2) Moisture (apple cores, sliced carrots, banana peels) to add to the medium (moist grain) that they would reside in. 3) The mealworms were not fully grown and would need their skin sheds cleaned out weekly or so. 4) After shedding, I could then clean them up and keep them in the basement or garage to feed the birds over winter.

I decided to try it. I found an old aquarium in the archives in the basement, even had a screen for the top, and headed over for my mealworms and a tutorial. My friend was very thorough in going over the process of removing skin sheds, adding moisture, and covering them with newspaper to keep the light out. And then finally to feed the birds in the same location and the birds will learn to look for them.



I was now the proprietor of an aquarium filled with live mealworms. The fun began! Cleaning skin sheds and thankful for a helpful wind to blow them out of the tank. Wearing a mask is advised for this, as the grain will blow up also! (I didn't trust myself to use a shop vac with all those tiny mealworms.) Adding moisture was easy and sliced carrots seemed to be my moisture of choice. And I was careful to examine the folded newspaper when on cleaning duty as I found the mealworms like to congregate in the folds of darkness and fall to the ground.



While visiting, during this mealworm venture, one of our daughters happened to venture into the garage for something during the night. The next morning, I awoke to her waiting for me at the kitchen table to ask, "Mom, what is going on in the garage?". In the dark the mealworms get active, and there is a lot of rustling and rolling with quite a bit of noise, for something so small! Seems the noise startled her! I guess I forgot to fill her in on my new endeavor.

I got into a routine and the mealworms grew and through the winter I would feed the birds approximately twelve mealworms in a plastic feeder designed for the mealworms to not escape. I soon transitioned to a fancy teacup found at a thrift store years ago. It was cute, the sides were slick, and the mealworms could not escape. I had the fun of watching three species partake of the juicy, nutrient filled mealworm treat, White-breasted Nuthatch, Tufted Titmouse, and the Carolina Wren. I even took some pictures of them eating from the cup that were made into some cute birding gifts for friends.



As winter passed to spring, the mealworms wanted to change too. I now had the dilemma of what to do with the pupating mealworms. So, I decided to freeze them before they changed into beetles and finish off feeding the birds what was left from winter.

I continued using the teacup to feed the frozen mealworms when it dawned on me, I could now put them in ANY container, and they wouldn't crawl out. I found myself coming up with some fun props for the birds to feed near and I had the bonus as an avid photographer to capture some fun pictures.

It ended up not only being a real treat for the birds but for me as well! I am sharing a few photos here for a treat for you as well!

Text and photos by **Kathy Fox**

Thread-waisted Wasp

Bob Mangile

At 1:00 P.M., July 27, 2022, I celebrated our 58 anniversary by observing a Gold-marked Thread-waisted Wasp (*Eremnophila aureonotata*) for about 30 minutes as it dragged a green larva 150 feet over mostly bare ground and place it into a previously dug hole.

It was first observed straddled over the larva on the concrete out back. It seemed to be aimlessly wandering in various directions. It struggled to negotiate obstacles, i.e., sticks, leaves, etc., but was persistent. At times it would drop the larva and wander or fly in what appeared to be confused patterns before getting back on the larva. I thought of taking a photo but the camera was in the house and I might not find it when I returned. After following it for 25 minutes and 150 feet it dropped the larva and seemed to be fixed on a 4 foot diameter area on the ground. Back and forth it roamed for what seemed like an endless search for something - but what. I saw a small pencil size hole in the ground that might be what it was looking for but it passed over it several times without hesitation. And finally it focused on a spot of interest where it began moving bits of litter. To my surprise it uncovered a hole in the ground that was previously dug for the depositing of the larva.

It entered the shallow hole several time and brought out bits of debris and then it grabbed the larva and dragged down the hole, not head first but backwards. After more preparations it then began taking bits of broken dried leaves and filling the hole. It appeared the task was almost complete and I ran for my camera but, alas, when I returned it was gone. And for the life of me I could not locate the filled hole which I had marked earlier.

The following is some information I got from the Internet. The adult female digs a burrow. After completing the burrow, it seals the entrance and makes flight around the area, memorizing landmarks such as rocks, plants, etc. It uses these landmarks to locate the burrow when it returns, sometimes days later. It then captures and paralyzes prey, usually a moth caterpillar or sawfly larva, and drags it to the burrows where it lays a single egg on the prey. The female then seals the nest with dirt and debris. The egg typically hatches after two days, and the larva feeds on the caterpillar for about five days before it pupates within the nest. It emerges from the nest with fully formed wings.



BIRDS "CAPTURED" BY KATHY FOX



Harris Sparrow



Yellow Warbler



Happenings in Southeast KS

EARTH DAY 2023

Sperry-Galligar Audubon participated in the Pittsburg Area Earth Day Celebration, April 22. The event was held at the Miner's Pavillion, downtown Pittsburg, with an enthusiastic crowd. Many people stopped by our tables to engage in a drawing, purchase chapter-made items, take a bird quiz, or just "talk birds".

Thanks to Ray Benner, Kathy Fox, Megan Corrigan, Wayne Bockelman, Cindy Ford, Steve Ford, and Mary Jo Meier for attending the table.

Congratulations to the winners of the drawing:

1st Prize - Recycled suet feeder in a bird photo tote - Katie Budd

2nd Prize - Bird photo mug and tote bag - Mary Ann Cochran

3rd Prize - Bird photo tote bag and book - JoEllen McLendon

Sightings...

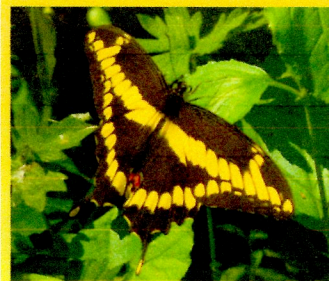


PLANTS & BUTTERFLIES

If you plant paw paws you may see zebra swallowtails.



If you plant prickly ash you may see giant swallowtails.



Many butterflies and moths need specific plants in order to complete their life cycles.



Photo by Kathy Fox



Photo by Mary Jo Meier

**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**

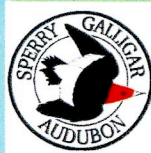
Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____



EVENTS & ETC.

**SUMMER
AUDUBON ... 2023**

**NO MEETINGS
UNTIL SEPTEMBER**

**BIRD WALKS WILL
BE HELD FIRST
SATURDAY OF THE
MONTH...AS USUAL**

**CHECK THE
AUDUBON WEBSITE AND
FACEBOOK PAGE FOR
BIRD WALKS AND TIMES
TO MEET**

*See you in the fall.
Happy Birding*

**Sperry-Galligar Audubon
Society**

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.)

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

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.