

Wichita Audubon



Volume 39 No. 5 January/February 2005

CNC Upcoming Programs

January 29, Saturday & February 5, Saturday 10 a.m. - Noon Eagle Watch

Mid-winter is a great time to view Bald Eagles in Kansas. Searching for open water, many eagles migrate down to Kansas to find open water with the fish they love to eat. The group will take a 1.5 mile hike down to the Arkansas River. If you have binoculars, bring them; if not, the Nature Center can loan you a pair.

March 4, Friday 7 - 8 p.m. Night Hike

Hike through the woods without flashlights and get to know your five senses. Listen to night sounds and learn about nocturnal animals. Dress for the outdoors and wear sturdy shoes.

For more information about any Chaplin Nature Center programs call Shawn Silliman at 620-442-4133, or e-mail cnc@wichitaudubon.org.



January Meeting

Our January program will be a trip to the tropics, specifically the Caribbean islands of Trinidad and Tobago, presented by Matt Gearhart. Matt is an architect by profession, and recently was awarded a contract to design a new Audubon Center in Joplin, Missouri. But his other passion is birding. He is field trip chair for Burroughs Audubon in Kansas City, on the board of KOS, on the bird records committee of KOS, and a great photographer. He spent two weeks in Trinidad hiking the rainforest and finding unusual birds like the scarlet ibis. He also explored sea bird nesting sites on the coastal areas. The program will be January 18, 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium at the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th and Woodlawn.

You can also join Matt and other members for dinner at Jason's Deli, in Bradley Fair at 21st and Rock Road, at 5:45 p.m. before the meeting.



Matt Gearhart

February Meeting

Mike Blair has been the still photographer for the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, since 1986. Mike was quoted from

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Coming Events

January 18

Regular meeting, "Trinidad and Tobago - Carnival of Nature," by Matt Gearhart, 7:30 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center.

January 20

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Commission meeting in Topeka. See Whooping Crane article on page 3.

January 29 February 5

Eagle Watch at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 am to noon. Leader: Shawn Silliman, 620-442-4133, cnc@wichitaudubon.org

February 18-21

Great Backyard Bird Count. See page 4

February 15

Regular meeting, "Kansas Wildlife Images," by Mike Blair, 7:30 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center.

February 19

Field Trip to Lake Tenkiller in Oklahoma to look for loons. See article on page 3 for details.

March 4

Night Hike 7 - 8 p.m. at Chaplin Nature Center

February Meeting, continued

program Sunflower Journey's as saying "My photography I look at as simply a recording of the beauty that's there. I don't look at my photography as an art form so much as simply taking a picture of a beautiful art form that was already created and made for us."

Photographers and wildlife lovers will get a real treat as Mike presents a program of Kansas native plants, wildlife and natural scenery photographed in Kansas.

The program will be on Tuesday, February 15, 7:30 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th and Woodlawn.

Join Mike and other members for dinner at Jason's Deli, in Bradley Fair at 21st and Rock Road, at 5:45 pm before the meeting.

Big Brother Big Sisters Program

Mark your calendars now for another program for Big Brother Big Sister kids on April 9. We're planning a trip to Chaplin Nature Center. Details are still being planned, but we need to have one adult to match with each child, preferably of the same gender. The two programs we did last year were really fun, so plan to join us this spring. Watch for more details in the next newsletter.

Estate Planning

The Wichita Audubon Society recently received a bequest from the estate of Anna Adrian, a long time member and supporter of our organization. We are very thankful for these gifts - they make Chaplin Nature Center possible.

As a new year begins, give some thought to your own plans, and please remember Wichita Audubon and Chaplin Nature Center.

Bird Seed Sale

Buy your bird seed from Wichita Audubon and support your chapter. We sell and deliver bird seed. The next delivery date will be January 22. To place your order call Carol at 685-4867 or email ccumberland@swbell.net by January 18. You may also mail your order to WAS, PO Box 47607, Wichita, KS 67201. Include your name, address, and phone number.

___25 lb Black Oil Sunflower@\$10
___25 lb Audubon Mix @\$8
___25 lb Safflower Seed@\$18

A big thank you to the people who helped deliver in December: Dan Shady, Justin Williams, Kevin Groeneweg, Hal and Carol Cumberland.

Volunteer Honors

At the January meeting we plan to honor the following people who have participated in 20 or more Wichita Christmas Bird Counts:

Walker Butin - 45 counts
Dan Kilby - 41 counts
Wallace Champeny - 41 counts
Savilla Stegall - 34 counts
Eddie Stegall - 34 counts
Don Vannoy - 32 counts
Bob Gress - 21 counts
Rick Goodrick - 20 counts

In addition, Wallace Champeny served as compiler for 25 consecutive years (1972-1996).

Those are impressive numbers! And when you consider that all of these people help with other counts too, their contribution is even more impressive.

Also, Pete Janzen has put together a book detailing the whole 50 year history of the Wichita Christmas Bird Counts. You can see the book and order copies at the meeting.

2004-2005 WAS Officers

President	Kevin Groeneweg	687-4268	kgroeneweg@cox.net
Vice-president	Carol Cumberland	685-4867	carol.cumberland@swbell.net
Secretary	Nancy Beard	722-3081	wbeard@cox.net
Treasurer	Sandra Tholen	634-0049	stholen@cox.net

Directors

Bill Beard	722-3081	wbeard@cox.net
Mary Kemmer	688-5322	rockchalk123@aol.com
Rosa McHenry	263-4042	rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net
Gary Straley	620-221-3664	garrob@hit.net
Don DeWitt	722-0742	ddewitt@omnibizcenter.com
Anne Tarver		anne.tarver@wichita.edu

Committee Chairs

Newsletter	Patty Marlett	942-2164	pmarlett@mac.com
CNC	Gary Straley	620-221-3664	garrob@hit.net
Programs	Carol Cumberland	685-4867	carol.cumberland@swbell.net
Conservation	Bill Beard	722-3081	wbeard@cox.net
Development	Rosa McHenry	263-4042	rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net
Membership	Sister Patricia Stanley		pstanley@csjwichita.org
Hospitality	Laura Groeneweg	687-4268	lauranng@cox.net
Field Trips	Cheryl Miller	978-6659 (wk)	avian67226@hotmail.com
Finance	Don DeWitt	722-0742	ddewitt@omnibizcenter.com
Naturalist	Shawn Silliman	620-442-4133	cnc@wichitaudubon.org

www.wichitaudubon.org

email any officer: was@wichitaudubon.org

Send address changes to Sister Patricia Stanley, 6739 Perryton, Wichita, KS 67226
pstanley@csjwichita.org

Tenkiller Lake Field Trip

Every winter Tenkiller Lake in Oklahoma is host to hundreds of loons: Common Loons, Yellow-billed Loons, and Pacific Loons. On February 19 we're going to journey south to take in the sight. The staff at Tenkiller State Park is holding a loon watch that day from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., so we will take advantage of their expertise and join them. We will meet at 8 a.m. at Fisherman's Point in Tenkiller State Park.

If the weather is bad that weekend we will try again the next Saturday, February 26. Please register in advance with Patty Marlett so you can be notified if we make changes. There will be a sign up sheet at the January and February meetings, or you can call 942-2164 or email pmarlett@mac.com.

It is 260 miles from Wichita to the park, and will take about 4 hours to drive. There are cabins in the state park available for rent. You can make reservations at 800-654-8240, or email tenkillercabins@oklahomaparks.com. The drawback to the cabins is that they require a five day cancellation notice.

If you prefer there is a Hampton Inn (918-682-2587) and a Travelodge (918-683-2951) in Muskogee, about 30 miles away. Dress warmly and come see a sight you don't often find in our part of the world!

Thanks

A big thank you to everyone who helped our fund-raising efforts by buying a calendar. A special thanks to Dr. Tom Gray, who once again was our number one calendar salesman, selling around 80 calendars!

Whooping Cranes

As probably everyone has already heard, Sandhill Crane hunters shot and killed two Whooping Cranes on the opening day of the Sandhill Crane season about 2 miles west of Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. A third bird that was with the other two remained at Quivira and was last seen December 10. It is presumed dead also.

This tragedy is the result of 7 hunters who fired on a group of Sandhills, claiming that the glare of the sun prevented them from identifying the Whooping Cranes.

The Wichita Audubon Society had been opposed to a Sandhill Crane hunting season ever since it was first allowed in 1993. Originally hunting was only allowed in the southwest portion of the state, not around Quivira and Cheyenne Bottoms, and the season began the last weekend in November, to avoid the Whooping Crane migration. A few years ago that policy was liberalized. The season was moved up to the first weekend in November, and the area was greatly expanded to include the whole state west of a line that coincides with I-135.

This year the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks sold 445 Sandhill Crane permits at \$6 each. It seems ludicrous that more than 50 years of effort and millions of dollars of Federal tax money that have gone into saving Whooping Cranes could be threatened for the sake of 445 hunters and \$2,670 dollars. (Coincidentally, there are approximately the same number of Whooping Cranes alive today as there are crane hunters in Kansas.)

Although we would prefer to see

crane hunting eliminated altogether, it is probably unrealistic to think that this one incident will be enough to change the minds of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. We can, however, bring enough pressure to get some reforms that will help protect the Whoopers.

You can help by writing to the Governor, the Director of Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks, and the KDWP Commissioners. You can also attend the next Commission meeting. It will be held January 20 at Memorial Hall Auditorium (next to the Landon Office Building) in Topeka. The meeting begins at 1:30 p.m., breaks for dinner, and then reconvenes at 7:00 p.m. The agenda has not yet been published, so we don't know exactly when this topic will be discussed, but you can check for it on the web at www.kdwp.state.ks.us/about.html. We plan to send a delegation. You can also find the names and addresses of the commissioners at that website.

Here are the addresses to write:

Mike Hayden, Secretary
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
1020 S. Kansas Ave., Suite 200
Topeka, KS 66612

Governor Kathleen Sebelius
Office of the Governor
Capitol, 300 SW 10th Ave.,
Ste. 212S
Topeka, KS 66612-1590

E-mail can be sent to Governor Sebelius at the following site:
www.ks.gov/governor.org/comment.html

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Great Backyard Bird Count Feb 18-21

During the weekend of February 18 through 21, people across the North American continent are encouraged to count the birds in their backyards and report them over the Internet, as part of the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), one of the world's largest volunteer efforts of its kind. People report the birds around them by going out into the "Great Backyard" during any or all of the count days and keeping track of the highest numbers of each bird species they see. People then report their sightings over the Internet at www.birdsource.org/gbbc. Instructions can be found at the same website. There is no fee or registration required to participate, so join in the fun!

Oak Park Concerns

Several people are concerned about the recent expansion of the frisbee golf course in Oak Park. New holes have been added. One of them extends into the southwest corner of the wooded area, and there has been extensive clearing of the underbrush in the area. The concern is that this represents further degradation and disturbance in what is already a tiny but important place for migratory birds. There are safety concerns about flying frisbees in the woods. Also, the decisions about hole placement and undergrowth clearing are being made not by the parks department, but by a group of individuals.

The Wichita Audubon Society board has decided that we need to do the following things:

- a. Make birdwatchers a more visible presence in the park.
- b. Demonstrate that we are a positive

group by holding regular trash cleanups in the park.

c. Document our complaints carefully and specifically.

You can help by carrying a notebook, and if possible a camera, whenever you go to Oak Park. If you observe a problem write down the date and exactly what you observed. We think specifics will get more attention than just general grouching.

Help with our trash cleanups. We will announce dates in the next newsletter.

Attend meetings of the Wichita Park commission and the Riverside Citizens Association and let them know that you are a concerned birder with an interest in Oak Park.

Let our officers know if you have additional suggestions for ways we can help the park and the birds that depend on it.