

Wichita Audubon



Volume 38 No. 6 March 2004

CNC Upcoming Programs

March 5, Friday 7 - 8 pm Owl Prowl

Why have owls traditionally been seen as bad omens? Find out the truth about owls and the many adaptations that have made them one of the most successful and mysterious nocturnal animals. A short indoor presentation will be followed by an outdoor night hike to listen for their calls.

April 3, Saturday 10 am - 3 pm Spring Clean-up

We need volunteers to help get the Chaplin Nature Center in shape for the coming year. Help is needed in all areas, from building clean up to trail maintenance. Light work loads or heavy, your choice. There is a place for you to help no matter what your skills.!

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



March Meeting

Our speaker will be Dr. Brett K. Sandercock, Assistant Professor of avian Ecology at Kansas State University. He will speak on "Conservation of Grassland Birds: Lessons from Prairie Chickens and Upland Sandpipers." Populations of grassland birds are declining in many regions of North America, for reasons that are poorly understood. Brett's research program at Konza Prairie Biological Station involved the population studies of two species of conservation concern: the Greater Prairie Chicken and the Upland Sandpiper. Join us to find out more about our prairie birds.

The program will be March 16, 7:30 pm in the auditorium at the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th and Woodlawn.

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

KOA at CNC

On Saturday, April 24, the Kansas Astronomical Observers will be at Chaplin Nature Center from dusk until 10 pm with their telescopes. The public is invited to join them and share the sights through their equipment.

CNC has very dark skies - not a lot of light pollution down there - so it is an excellent place for astronomy.

Coming Events

March 5

Owl Prowl at Chaplin Nature Center, 7 - 8 pm

March 16

Regular meeting, "Conservation of Grassland Birds: Lessons from Prairie Chickens and Upland Sandpipers" by Brett Sandercock, 7:30 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center.

March 27

Pawnee Prairie Park field trip. Meet at the old Nature Center parking lot on South Tyler Rd at 8 am. Leader: Bill Beard, 722-3081, wbeard@cox.net.

April 3

Spring cleanup at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 am - 3 pm.

April 10-17

Colorado Grouse Extended Field Trip. Leader: Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com

April 24

Kansas Astronomical Observers at CNC, dusk to 10 pm

April 30-May 2

Camp Horizon family weekend. Leader: Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com

KNRC Website

If you are interested in following environmental issues in the Kansas legislature, an excellent source of information is the website of the Kansas Natural Resource Council. They publish a weekly newsletter during the legislative session that describes and discusses bills that impact on environmental issues. The newsletter, titled KLUE, can be found at www.knrc.ws/klue.htm. There are also many links to help you find your representative/senator, locate the legislative calendar and track a bill through committees.

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 March 28. To place your order call Carol at 685-4867 or email ccumb@swbell.net by March 24. You may also mail your order to WAS, PO Box 47607, Wichita, KS 67201. Include your name, address, and phone number.

Order for March 20 delivery:
___25 lb Black Oil Sunflower@\$10
___25 lb Audubon Mix @\$8

Volunteer Thank You!!!

A Big Thank You to our January Bird Seed volunteers: Duane DeLong, Kevin Groeneweg, Hal Cumberland, Dan Shady and Justin Williams.

Environmental Update

The following issues are updates from the National Audubon Society. You can find our more about each issue at the Audubon website: http://www.audubon.org/campaign/Latest_News.html

ENDANGERED SPECIES:

Rumblings abound that efforts to weaken the Endangered Species Act (ESA) will be picking up steam over the next few weeks in Congress, as well as federal government agencies. Like we mentioned in the last issue of the Advisory, you'll hear all kinds of buzzwords as to why the ESA needs to be changed -- but don't be fooled! Changes are sought primarily to appease a handful of politically powerful special interests! So stay tuned! In the meantime, contact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and urge them to oppose efforts to change the ESA and allow circuses, pet importers, and leather importers to promote the killing and capture of endangered species!

CLEAN WATER RESTORATION ACT:

Ensuring our nation enjoys clean, drinkable, swimmable, safe water was the purpose of the Clean Water Act when it was written more than 30 years ago. And even though up to 40% of our waters still do not meet this requirement, efforts have been underway for the last several years to actually remove some of these protections and weaken the Clean Water Act. Congress has the ability to reverse this trend by supporting bill numbers H.R. 962 in the House, and S.473 in the Senate - the Clean Water Restoration Act that will stop the slow demise of the Act by reaffirming its original intent. *Continued on page 4*

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

K.U. Field Trip

The February field trip to the K. U. Museum of Natural History gave WAS members a chance to see some birds they will never see in the field: Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Carolina Parakeet, and Eskimo Curlew.

Mark Robbins had a hard time convincing Dan Kilby that he couldn't list stuffed birds! Thanks to Mark for the tour and unique opportunity to see such treasures.



Make Your Backyard Bird Friendly: Audubon At Home Launches Website

You know where you live, but do you know your "ecological address?" Audubon At Home, a new program made possible in part by the US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), is bringing conservation home through an exciting, interactive website designed to give guests useful information on making their backyards more bird-friendly, and their homes healthier and safer for their families. It accomplishes this by helping users identify the natural characteristics of their property and its role in local ecology.

As the centerpiece of this year's Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) www.birdsource.org/gbbc/ <<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>>, Audubon is stressing the value of backyard habitat and asks participants

to make their yards not only bird-friendly, but also bird-safe. The new Audubon At Home website, <http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/index.html>, contains a treasure trove of information that gives users the tools they need to create backyards that will attract birds and safeguard them as well.

"Each yard, no matter the size, has the potential to help birds," said Sally Conyne, Director of the GBBC. "By providing just a few necessities, your home landscape will attract birds, beneficial insects, and other wildlife. You'll be rewarded with a low-maintenance yard bustling with the variety of colors and textures you would find in far wilder places."

Historically, conservation efforts have focused on open space and

wilderness tracts. Fragmented by development and industry, natural lands, especially those near metropolitan areas, are dwindling even as you read the words on this page. In the United States suburban sprawl increases by more than 2 million acres every year.

Audubon At Home is an innovative program designed to mitigate some of the problems created in suburban areas. Birds and other wildlife don't recognize property lines and travel into yards where food and shelter are provided. What individuals do in their own yards can make a difference in the lives of birds; the healthier American yards are, the better for the health of the environment.

**P.O. Box 47607
Wichita, KS 67201**

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PROTECTING MIGRATORY SONGBIRDS:

Want to help make sure that many of those beautiful songbirds that visit your backyard do so each and every year? Well, one way you can is to encourage your Members of Congress to fully fund - and reauthorize - the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act - our nation's only law that focuses on conserving critical habitat of songbirds - including some of the most endangered bird species in North America such as the Kirtland's Warbler, Bicknell's Thrush, Black-capped Vireo, and a species of great concern, the Cerulean Warbler.

STORMWATER:

We could still use your help with encouraging your two U.S. Senators to support increased funding for nationwide efforts to control pollution

from roads, buildings, driveways and lawns - referred to as "urban stormwater."

INVASIVE SPECIES:

Invasive, non-native species that choke out, devour and destroy native birds, wildlife and their habitat have infested more than 100 million acres of the American landscape and cause \$130 billion worth of damage to the American economy each year. The problem is spreading, and multiplying fast. And Congress has opportunities to help via legislation currently pending in the House and Senate.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

The fight to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is underway! Pro-drillers are hoping to attach a provision allowing drilling in the

Arctic Refuge to a bill called a budget resolution (a piece of legislation that expresses the overall budget priorities of the Congress). The provision would incorporate revenue generated from leasing parts of the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas development companies into the nation's budget - a back door maneuver that will open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling while avoiding a fair and open debate on the floors of the House and Senate. You'll recall that last year, the effort to drill in the Arctic Refuge was ultimately defeated in the U.S. Senate by a mere TWO VOTES. That's why the pro-drilling special interests are back to try again this year. And you can bet they are determined to win this year at any cost! And the fight begins in the U.S. House of Representatives - and it begins today!