

Wichita Audubon



Volume 36 No. 3 October 2001

October Meeting

Our October meeting features our own Roy Beckemeyer with an account of his journey to India. With a population of a billion people and a history of human civilization dating back thousands of years, India is a complex and exciting country. One might expect such an ancient civilization and dense population to have depleted the wildlife long ago. But a trip to some of the National Parks of India reveals a complex

tapestry of biodiversity that supports populations of one of nature's most magnificent top-predators: the Bengal Tiger. Explore the fascinating archeological, cultural and natural features of India with Roy on October 16, 7:30 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center. You are also invited to join the speaker for dinner at Jason's Deli, 21st and Rock Road, at 5:45 pm.

Coming Events

October 5, 6, 7
KOS Fall meeting at the Great Plains Nature Center.

October 13
Fall Nature Day at Chaplin Nature Center, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm.

October 16
Regular Meeting, "Life and Wildlife in India," by Roy Beckemeyer, 7:30 pm Great Plains Nature Center.

October 20
Chisholm Park Cleanup
Meet in the parking lot of the Great Plains Nature Center at 10 am to help with our semi-annual trash pickup. Leader: Paul Hobelman, 265-8694.

October 21
Slate Creek Marsh/Oxford Field Trip
Meet at the Slate Creek Valley Baptist Church, 7 miles south of the main intersection in Oxford, at 9 am. Leader: Gene Young, 620-442-5331, youngg@cowleycollege.com

October 27
Maple Grove Cemetery Field Trip
Meet at the entrance at 1100 N. Hillside at 8 am. Leader: Cheryl Miller, 978-7900 cheryl.miller@wichita.edu

CNC Upcoming Programs

Fall Nature Day
October 13, 9:30am-2:30pm



Cynthia Moss portrays turn of the century author Gene Stratton-Porter

Come to Ark City and enjoy beautiful fall day filled with fun outdoor activities. There are bird walks, a herp walk, live herp demonstration (herps are reptiles and amphibians),

crafts for kids, display of honeybees and honey production techniques. A special treat this year is a program by Cynthia Ross of Andover, performing a characterization of
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For more information about any Chaplin Nature Center programs call Shawn Silliman at 620-442-4133, or e-mail cnc@wichitaaudubon.org.

Chisholm Creek Park Cleanup

Saturday, October 20, marks the date of our next trash pickup at Chisholm Creek Park. Wichita Audubon does this twice a year as a service project. Meet at 10:00 am in the parking lot of the Great Plains Nature Center. Trash bags and sticks will be provided. Wear old clothes and bring gardening type gloves. With enough help this only takes a couple of hours. For more information call Paul Hobelman, 265-8694.

Bird Seed Sale

Bird seed is available Wichita Audubon sells and delivers bird seed . To make an advanced order call or email Carol at 685-4867 or ccumb@swbell.net.

Wichita Audubon Bird Seed Order Form Delivered Prices:

Mail to: WAS PO Box 47607 Wichita, KS 67201

	QTY	
November 10	_____	25 lb. Black Oil Sunflower @ \$10.00
	_____	25 lb. Audubon Mix @ \$7.00
January 19	_____	25 lb. Black Oil Sunflower @ \$10.00
	_____	25 lb. Audubon Mix @ \$7.00
March 16	_____	25 lb. Black Oil Sunflower @ \$10.00
	_____	25 lb. Audubon Mix @ \$7.00

Calendars

The 2002 Bird calendars are in and available for only \$4.00 each. You can purchase them at meetings, or call Sandra Tholen at 634-0049. They make great Christmas gifts!

Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Best time to call _____

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www.wichitaudubon.org

email any officer: was@wichitaudubon.org

Send address changes to Sherry Brewer, 3231 SW Farmstead Rd, Benton, KS 67017 (316)778-1648 or e-mail lpbrewer@earthlink.net

NAS Server Down

The headquarters of the National Audubon Society in New York City was very near the World Trade Center. It was undamaged in the attack, but their internet provider was destroyed and so e-mail communication and access to the web site is impossible at present. Phone service remains erratic also, but regular snail mail works fine. The Wichita Audubon Society website is not on the National server, and is functioning normally at <www.wichitaudubon.org>.

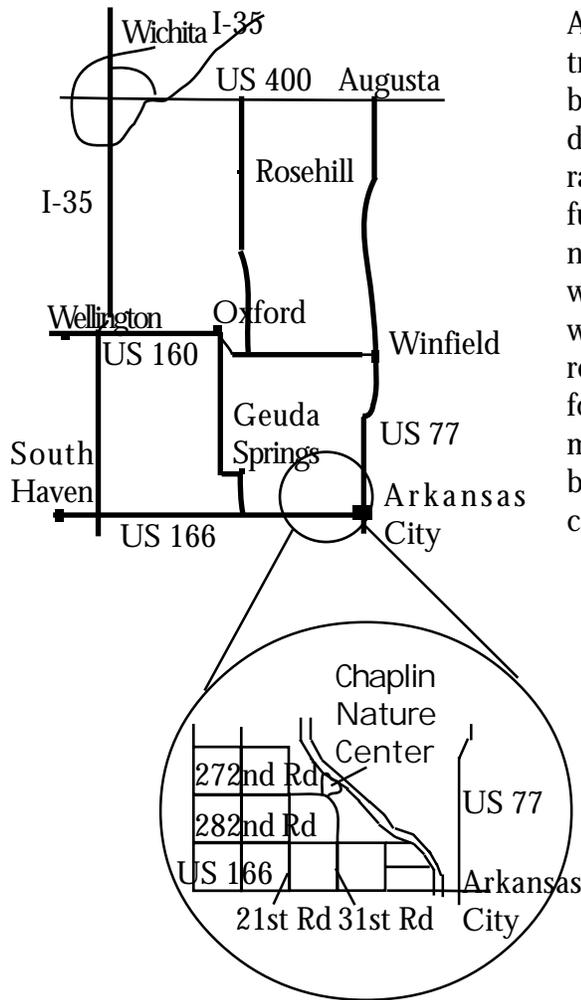
Correction

The annual Schedule of Events has an error. The May 2002 meeting and program is on May 21, not May 14 as is printed in the schedule. Please note the correct date on your schedule.

Fall Nature Day

Continued from page 1

Gene Stratton-Porter. Porter was known as the “Bird Woman of Limberlost Swamp” because she loved birds and roamed the Indiana swamp photographing and writing about nature. Her books included “Freckles,” “The Girl of the Limberlost,” and “Song of the Cardinal.” Cynthia will be dressed in Porter’s “Bird Woman” attire, including a brimmed hat to keep the bugs and debris out of her hair, a vest with pockets for snacks, long sleeved blouse and pants for protections from brush and high-topped boots because of snakes. Stratton-Porter will also come equipped with her heavy load of photographic equipment, and will be accompanied by her pet blue jay, Hezediah, and her favorite rooster, Bobby. This presentation will be at 1:00 pm.



As always there will be a country store featuring homemade baked goods, homegrown produce, and similar goodies. A raffle is being held for a beautiful hand crocheted afghan donated by Louise Wherry. There will also be a silent auction, with a good selection of nature related products. Lunch will be for sale and will feature homemade pies and cakes, or you can bring your own picnic. Please come!

Birding in Kansas

At the instant the solitary cronk of a south-cruising Canada goose unflaps itself out of the cold and launches its cry over these thousand acres, a single oak leaf reaches its perfect rust-colored pitch and rises into lightness. And the silence its rising and pitch is made of meets and transposes the kingdom- making note of the disappearing bird.

From “Toward a Theory of Harmonics”, a poem by Ralph Black, in Turning Over the Earth, published by Milkweed Editions, Minneapolis MN (2000)

October is jammed with these harmonic instants. Acorns falling to feed ever-expanding squirrels until

next spring. Dragonflies dying in the gullets of prairie gulls passing through on the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Life giving up, for the season, its riches, in order to nourish the hopes of a season to come, a season past the fog and ice and tiny days of winter. October is the best month of all for those who favor irony and bittersweet. And it is a good month to be outdoors, to see both the grand spectacles of migration and the microscopic miracles of death and repose.

Sparrows arrive in Kansas this month.

And sparrows, though regarded by most as dun birds of dubious worth, are simply gorgeous. Kansas native and KU grad Jim Rising has published a field guide devoted completely to the sparrows, soon to come out in a second edition, and he points out that sparrows are an identification challenge as well as an aesthetic pursuit. The problems they present for the beginning birdwatcher are manifold. Sparrows are, for the most part, furtive and difficult to study at your leisure. They are also mostly brown, and brown is not a color that most birders deem

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Birding In Kansas

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attractive. But a white-throated sparrow, with resplendent eyebrow and flashy lores the color of scrambled eggs, is unforgettable if properly seen. The harlequin face of our summer-resident lark sparrows has been described more than once as "too pretty to be a sparrow." A Harris' sparrow, with black bib and portly stature, seems to be dressed as if for a state dinner. Lincoln's sparrows seem to be pin-striped gentlemen and ladies, delicately moving into the light and back again into the shadows before you can adequately appreciate their beauty. Vesper sparrows, LeConte's sparrows, fox sparrows and many other elegant members of this tribe will pass through here this month. You will miss them, and the irony of their subtle beauty, unless you get out and look. Kansas and Missouri are excellent places to learn about

sparrows, both the migratory species and the winter or summer residents. But first you have to get outdoors and patiently stalk them, cajole them into sight, and when you do you will be hooked on them too.

Flashier birds, less of an identification challenge than sparrows, also put in an appearance in the state this month. Waterfowl migration escalates in October, and literally millions of ducks and geese will pass through our dwindling marshlands this month. Most of the drakes pose no challenge to even a mid-level birdwatcher, but the hens are subtle beauties, and often are best identified by their associations with a male consort. And occasionally an unidentifiable bird appears, the hybrid offspring of some wild northern union, giving rise to much unsupported speculation about their

lineage. These are often once-in-a-lifetime sightings, and some can be spectacularly beautiful. Again, however, you need to be out there to find them, and to appreciate the multiple twists and turns of the DNA as expressed in these novel combinations.

So in these times of terror and uncertainty in the skies and on the land, it is appropriate that we find the harmonics in our migrant birds. They can teach us a lot about living gently on the planet, a lot about beauty, a lot about how much things change and how much they remain the same. We need to find resonance with these other species; it will surely help us find a much-needed resonance with our own kind.

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