

Wichita Audubon



Volume 36 No. 4 November/December 2001

CNC Upcoming Programs

November 16, Friday,
7:30 pm - 9 pm

Star and Planet Watch

Take a tour of the night sky and discover the constellations and legends about them. Telescopes will zero in on the planets Saturn and Jupiter. Bring a lawn chair or blanket for relaxed viewing.

Thank You

Thanks to all the many people who helped make Fall Nature Day a big success. The weather turned out to be beautiful. Reinactor Cynthia Ross, who presented a program in the person of Gene Stratton-Porter, was a big hit. We had an attendance of 90 people and raised more than \$850.

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



November Meeting

Our November program will be presented by Gene Young, Natural Science Instructor at Cowley County Community College. His presentation is "Towers and Wind Turbines: The Impact on Kansas Birds." He will present data and details on the impact of towers on Kansas birds and how it relates to other studies throughout the U.S. He will summarize trends observed at towers ranging from 100-1000+ feet to help answer the question: do all towers kill birds, and if so how many? Since wind turbine fields are proliferating, he will also discuss the current knowledge of bird deaths associated with wind turbines in Kansas and compare data from the eastern and western U.S.

The program will be at 7:30 pm November 20 at the Great Plains Nature Center. Help us welcome Gene by joining us for dinner before the meeting at Jason's Deli, at 21st and Rock Road in Bradley Fair, at 5:45 pm.

Boeing Grant

The Wichita Audubon Society has received a \$1000 grant from the Boeing Company Charitable Trust to support our speaker program. Boeing supports our efforts every year, and we thank them for their generosity.

January 5

Barber County Christmas Count.
Call Pete Janzen, 832-0182,
prarybrd@southwind.net

Coming Events

November 10

Project Feederwatch workshop on backyard bird feeding at Great Plains Nature Center, 1-3pm.

Fee: \$3/person, \$5/family

November 16

Star and Planet Watch at Chaplin Nature Center, 7:30 pm-9pm.

November 17

Field trip to Cheney Reservoir. Meet at the boat ramp at the west end of the dam, 7:30 am. Leader: Pete Janzen, 832-0182, prarybrd@southwind.net

November 20

Regular Meeting, "Towers and Wind turbines: The Impact on Kansas Birds," by Gene Young, 7:30 pm Great Plains Nature Center.

December 15

Wichita Christmas Bird Count. Meet at Lawrence-Dumont stadium 7:30 am. Leader: Pete Janzen, 832-0182.

December 22

Arkansas City Christmas Bird Count. Meet at Newman Park on Hwy 77, 8 am. Leader: Gene Young, 620-441-5331, youngg@cowleycollege.com.

December 29

El Dorado Christmas Bird Count
Meet at McDonald's in El Dorado,
7:30 am. Leader: Bill Langley,
316-321-3495,
blangley@butler.buccc.cc.ks.us

West Nile Virus

The University of Kansas Natural History Museum, in cooperation with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, is collecting reports of dead birds as part of a West Nile virus Surveillance program. The virus has not yet been reported from Kansas, but it has been found in Missouri.

West Nile Virus was first detected in New York City in August 1999, where an outbreak caused several human deaths and thousands of bird deaths. Most of the birds found dead were crows and blue jays, but the virus can kill dozens of species. Since the 1999 outbreak, the virus has spread across the eastern half of the US, reaching Florida and Iowa this year. The virus is transmitted to humans and horses by infected mosquitoes, which breed around man-made buildings and homes. Mosquitoes acquire the virus

from infected birds, some of which die. The virus may be most actively spread during bird migration season, and while weather is warm enough for mosquitoes to be active.

Researchers at the Museum are collecting reports of birds killed in Kansas by natural causes or accidents. They will need to know your name and telephone number, and the exact location of the bird. Please contact them IMMEDIATELY so that we can arrange to pick up the dead bird while still fresh.

Please report all encounters with dead or sick wild birds to:

Dr. Townsend Peterson
KU Natural History Museum
(785) 864-3926
e-mail: town@ku.edu

More information can be found at the KU Natural History Museum web site: www.nhm.ku.edu/birds

Bird Seed Sale

Wichita Audubon sells and DELIVERS bird seed. To place an advance order call or email Carol Cumberland at 685-4867 or ccumb@swbell.net, or you can send an order by mail to: WAS, PO Box 47607, Wichita, KS 67201.

The next delivery date is November 10, so orders must be in by November 7. Order enough for two months, as the next sale is January 19.

25 lb Black Oil Sunflower seed is \$10
25 lb Audubon Mix is \$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!

Birdfeeding Tips

Here are a few tips for providing healthy conditions for the birds that visit your feeders:

*Give your seed feeders a shake before you refill them, to dislodge any compacted seed. Dump out any wet clumps of old seed.

*Clean all hulls off platform feeders and out of seed trays daily.

*Disinfect feeders by scrubbing with a weak bleach solution (1/4 cup of bleach to 2 gallons of warm water) every few weeks. Rinse and allow feeders to dry before refilling.

*Wash your hands thoroughly after filling or cleaning your feeders.

*Move your feeding station when the ground beneath it becomes covered with seed hulls and droppings. Rake the old site to remove hulls and to give the grass a chance to recover.

2001-2002 WAS Officers

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|----------|--|
| President | Patty Marlett | 942-2164 | jmarlett@kscable.com |
| Vice-president | Kevin Groeneweg | 687-4268 | kgroeneweg@kscable.com |
| Secretary | Julia Hoppes | 682-2623 | jhoppes@kscable.com |
| Treasurer | Duane Delong | 684-7456 | dwdelong@earthlink.net |

Directors

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|--|
| Carol Cumberland | 685-4867 | ccumb@swbell.net |
| Merle Manlove | 264-4238 | mmanlove@aol.com |
| Barbara Millar | 838-8542 | bmi3931874@aol.com |
| Cheryl Miller | 978-7900 (wk) | cheryl.miller@wichita.edu |
| Jay Newton | 316-322-9090 | |
| Gary Straley | 620-221-3664 | garrob@hit.net |

Committee Chairs

| | | | |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|--|
| Newsletter | Patty Marlett | 942-2164 | jmarlett@kscable.com |
| CNC | Gary Straley | 620-221-3664 | garrob@hit.net |
| Programs | Kevin Groeneweg | 687-4268 | kgroeneweg@kscable.com |
| Conservation | Jay Newton | 316-322-9090 | |
| Development | Carol Cumberland | 685-4867 | ccumb@swbell.net |
| Membership | Sherry Brewer | 778-1648 | lpbrewer@earthlink.net |
| Hospitality | Laura Groeneweg | 687-4268 | lauranng@kscable.com |
| Education | Marsha Ebaugh | 682-4782 | 43042@prodigy.net |
| Field Trips | Harry Gregory | 263-7608 | birdfan@infli.net |
| Finance | Duane Delong | 684-7456 | dwdelong@earthlink.net |
| Naturalist | Shawn Silliman | 620-442-4133 | cnc@wichitaaudubon.org |

www.wichitaaudubon.org

email any officer: was@wichitaaudubon.org

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

Letter From John Flicker, President of the National Audubon Society

To the Audubon Family:

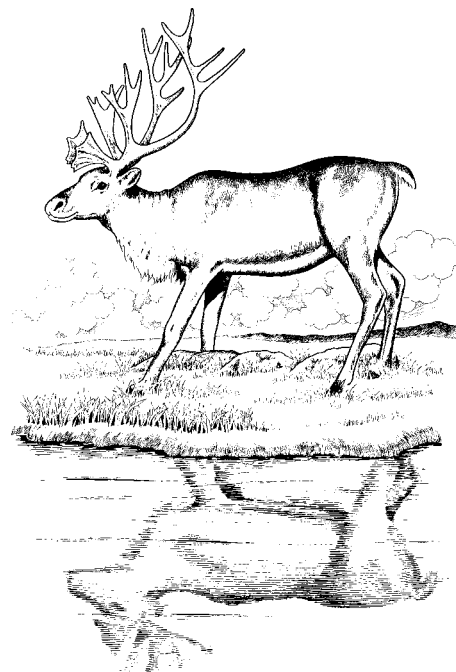
The tragic events of September 11, 2001 underscore what is most important to us, including protection of our most precious wild places. Audubon has been committed to the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for more than 25 years, and our efforts in support of that goal are now more important than ever. Because of the importance of the Arctic Refuge to Audubon, and to me personally, I am sending this message to update you on the approach we have taken and are taking to protect the refuge from oil drilling. The Public Policy Division in Washington, Audubon Alaska and other State Offices, and Audubon chapters, members and supporters all over the country are actively engaged in this effort. At present, this issue is Audubon's top organization-wide advocacy priority.

Because in its earliest days the new Administration made clear that drilling in the Arctic was one of its high priorities, Audubon has over the last 9 months: made an Arctic Refuge video for its grassroots network and the public to show what is at stake; produced and aired a television commercial urging citizens to contact their lawmakers to protect the Arctic Refuge; incorporated Arctic Refuge action measures into advocacy workshops; used our Audubon Advisory, Armchair Activist and Action Alerts to encourage members to contact their Members of Congress in support of protecting the refuge; established a special "Protect the Arctic" website that presents current updates and background information on the issue and offers the opportunity to communicate with Members of Congress instantly; and through Audubon Alaska, worked with the scientific community to bolster the case for protection of the Arctic Refuge, document the impacts and "footprint" of the oil industry, and bring scientists' concerns directly to the White House, Congress and the news media.

In the summer, as it became clear that House action on energy legislation would involve a close vote on oil drilling in the Arctic Refuge,

key State Directors came to Washington to talk to their representatives, while others communicated by telephone, letters and e-mails. Our grassroots staff in the Washington policy office made thousands of phone calls to chapters and activists across the country and sent tens of thousands of e-mails. All of these efforts were coordinated with those of the larger conservation community.

Unfortunately, we know all too well that politics triumphed over policy, and the House voted 222-206 on August 1 to open the Arctic Refuge to oil drilling. This vote was and should continue to be a wake-up call to the entire conservation community. It certainly led us within Audubon to reevaluate and redouble our efforts. The fight to save the Arctic Refuge is so important that we



must give it everything we've got, both for the sake of the refuge and for the sake of our broader conservation goals. Indeed, the Arctic Refuge has taken on such symbolic importance, that a loss on this issue could haunt us for years.

Looking to the immediate future, the action is now in the Senate. Before September 11, all signs pointed to a final vote on the Senate floor by late September, and we had plans in place to turn swing Senators to our side, including active outreach to and by Audubon Board members, State Offices, Chapters, advocates, and members. In light of the

horrific events of September 11, the Arctic Refuge debate in Congress was delayed and the next steps remain uncertain.

In the next few weeks, our efforts are focused first on ensuring that the Senate not act hastily to attach the Arctic Refuge oil drilling measure to an energy bill or some other legislation. In concert with the other organizations that have made the Arctic Refuge a top priority, we are tapping Audubon resources across the organization to reach key Senators on this issue. These efforts include radio and television advertisements, grassroots lobbying, work with the news media—all the tools in our toolkit. I personally will be visiting Senate offices in Washington and expect to call upon State Directors and national and state board members to help.

Depending on what happens in Congress in the next few weeks, we may have more time to implement a more deliberate Senate strategy to build awareness of and support for protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We are actively collaborating with other environmental groups to align our approach in these difficult times and will be asking many of you to help.

As a first step, I would encourage you to call, write or e-mail your own Senators to encourage them to oppose opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas development. You can also ask your friends and neighbors to do the same. Please let our D.C. staff know about your communications so they can have a record of contacts by Audubon Board members and staff. If you need additional information, you can go to our Arctic website (www.protecttheartctic.com) or contact our D.C. office at audubonaction@audubon.org.

Our work to protect the Arctic Refuge—for all it symbolizes and means to Audubon and to our nation as a unique and special place—must continue. I have made it a personal as well as an Audubon priority, and look forward to working with the entire organization to secure permanent protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I welcome your comments and your suggestions about how we can work most effectively to achieve this goal.

Thank you, John

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Christmas Bird Counts

More than 45,000 people participate each year in this all-day census of early-winter bird populations. The results of their efforts are compiled into the longest running database in ornithology, representing one hundred years of unbroken data on trends of early-winter bird populations across the Americas.

Up until the turn of the century, people commonly engaged in a holiday tradition known as the Christmas "Side Hunt": They would choose sides and go afield with their guns; whoever brought in the biggest pile of feathered quarry won. On Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank Chapman, an early officer in the then budding Audubon Society, called for an end to the slaughter. He suggested that, rather than shooting birds, people count them instead. So began the Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the inspiration of Frank M. Chapman and the perspiration of twenty-seven dedicated birders, twenty-five Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. The data from 101 years (and counting) of Christmas Bird Counts yield valuable insights into the shifting patterns, distributions, and population trends of bird species during the count period, which is from mid-December to early January. Volunteers are the heart and

soul of the CBC. So bundle up and join us for one of the many Christmas counts to be held this year:

December 15, Wichita. Meet at the Lawrence-Dumont Stadium at 7:30 am. Leader: Pete Janzen, 832-0182, prarybrd@southwind.net

December 22, Arkansas City. Meet at Newman Park on Hwy 77 just north of the Arkansas River, 8 am. Leader: Gene Young, 620-441-5331, youngg@cowleycollege.com.

December 29, El Dorado. Meet at McDonald's in El Dorado, 7:30 am. Leader: Bill Langley, 316-321-3495, blangley@butler.buccc.cc.ks.us

January 5, Barber County. Bad weather sometimes causes last minute changes, so call Pete Janzen for meeting time and location, 832-0182, prarybrd@southwind.net.

There are several other area counts as well: Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Harvey County, Winfield, and Pratt. At this time the schedule isn't available for all of them. Check our website at www.wichitaudubon.org or the KOS website at www.ksbirds.org for information as the season approaches.