

Wichita Audubon



Volume 39 No. 6 March 2005

CNC Upcoming Programs

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.

April 2, Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Spring Cleanup

Volunteer to help get CNC in shape for the upcoming season. Help is needed in all areas, from building cleanup to trail maintenance. Light workloads or heavy, your choice. There is a place for you 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 March program speaker will be photographer Priscilla Wilson. Her program will be a great way to escape the cold March weather of Kansas. We'll travel to Africa to see the birds of South Africa and Botswana. Priscilla and her husband have traveled and photographed birds world wide. She is a founder of TeamTech Inc., and a professional consultant and training specialist. Priscilla has given numerous programs on birds in the Kansas City area. The program will be March 15, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center.

Please join our guest speaker for dinner at Jason's Deli in Bradley Fair at 21st and Rock Road at 5:45 p.m. before her program.

In Memoriam: Ruth Hodges

Ruth passed away peacefully in her sleep on December 29 while visiting her daughter in Texas. She had been a member of Wichita Audubon for more than 35 years. She and her husband Bev, who died in 1995, were great supporters of Chaplin Nature Center and the Wichita Audubon Society. Their leadership and financial support helped make the Visitor's Center at Chaplin Nature Center a reality. Ruth was an avid birder, always eager to share her enthusiasm with others. Her gentle humor and always positive outlook will be greatly missed.

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Coming Events

March 4

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

March 12

Field trip to find displaying Woodcocks in the Lawrence area. Please sign up in advance with trip leader. Meet at noon at the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot. Leader: Pete Janzen, 832-0182, prarybrd@southwind.net

March 15

Regular meeting, "Birds of South Africa and Botswana," by Priscilla Wilson, 7:30 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center.

March 19

Oak Park cleanup. see page 2.

April 2

Pawnee Prairie Park field trip. Meet at 8 a.m. at the parking lot on South Tyler Road. Leader: Bill Beard, 722-3081, wbeard@cox.net

April 2

Chaplin Nature Center spring cleanup, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

April 9

Big Brothers Big Sisters program at Chaplin Nature Center
Kevin Groeneweg, 687-4268, kgroeneweg@cox.net

Ruth Hodges, cont.

Their estates will provide \$120,000 for the Chaplin Nature Center Endowment Fund. We are deeply grateful for all they have done.

The Hodges' children have generously donated the remaining personal and home furnishings to Wichita Audubon to sell for benefit of Chaplin Nature Center. We applaud and thank them as well.

We ask all of you to consider Wichita Audubon and Chaplin Nature Center as you prepare your estate plans. Wichita Audubon's commitment to environmental education and conservation is dependent on your financial support. If you have questions about making Wichita Audubon a beneficiary of your estate, please contact Finance Chair Don DeWitt at 722-0742.

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 19. To place your order call Carol at 685-4867 or email ccumberland@swbell.net by March 15. 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 January:
Duane DeLong, Kevin Groeneweg, Hal and Carol Cumberland.

Oak Park Cleanup

Join us March 19 to clean up Oak Park and get it ready for those spring migrants. We have invited the Riverside Citizens Association to join us, and they are really excited that we are doing this project. We'll start at 9:00 a.m., meeting on the north side by the lily pond.

Wear your Audubon shirt or hat or name tag to help advertise our presence. Gloves are also recommended. We'll provide trash bags, and we have some pick up sticks.

If the weather fails to cooperate we'll try again on the next Saturday, March 26.

As always, feel free to put in some time at your convenience if you can't join the group. Just let us know so we can document the hours contributed.

The leader is Rosa McHenry, rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net, 263-4042.

April Meeting

Note that the April meeting is on April 12, the second Tuesday instead of the usual third Tuesday. It was moved because the presenter and all the officers will be in Texas on the extended field trip on the usual meeting date.

Big Brother Big Sisters Program

Mark your calendars now for another program for Big Brother Big Sister kids on Saturday, April 9. We're planning a trip to Chaplin Nature Center for lunch and a hike. We need to have one adult to match with each child, preferably of the same gender. Sign up at the March meeting, or contact Kevin Groeneweg, 687-4268, kgroeneweg@cox.net if you can help. The two programs we did last year were really fun, so plan to join us.

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
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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
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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
ps Stanley@csjwichita.org

Evolution

If you have been following the news you know that state science standards concerning the teaching of evolution are under attack. The State Board of Education is holding public meetings throughout the state. If you can't make it to a meeting you can still express your opinion with letters and emails to the BOE members. You can find their names and addresses at <http://www.ksde.org/commiss/bdaddr.html>.

The Wichita representative on the board is

Carol Rupe
1110 N. Cypress Court,
Wichita, KS 67206
(316) 636-5436 (h)
(316) 973-5173 (FAX)
carolrupe@hotmail.com.

For people in Butler, Cowley, Sumner and eastern Sedgwick counties the representative is

Dr. Steve Abrahms
6964 W. 252nd Road
Arkansas City, KS 67005
(620) 442-7960 (h)
(620) 442-8803 (FAX)
sabrams@hit.net

For people north of Wichita, and in Reno, Harvey, and Kingman counties, the board member is:

Kenneth Willard
1725 W. 4th Avenue
Hutchinson, KS 67501
(620) 669-0498 (home)
(620) 669-0276 (FAX)
krw@ourtownusa.net

Whooping Cranes

Four WAS members attended the January 20 meeting of the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks meeting in Topeka to express our concern about the Sandhill Crane hunting season and the November shooting of two Whooping Cranes. About equal numbers of people spoke for and against changes in the season.

We were disappointed in the response of the commission, although 3 of the 7 seemed to favor some action. They agreed that they would wait pending more information about the shooting that occurred in November. Since that is a federal criminal case that must go before a grand jury, few details have been released.

Our general impression is that unless continued pressure is applied by a concerned public, the department will not take action. So it is up to us to keep up the pressure.

Some facts to consider for your letters:

The federal government spends \$4 million dollars of our tax money each year on Whooping Cranes.

Work to save Whooping Cranes has been going on for more than 50 years, and it is anticipated that it will be at least 35 more years before there will be 1,000 cranes.

There are only 5 places in the U.S. designated as critical habitat for Whoopers: Aransas NWR, TX; the Platte River, NEB, Great Salt Plains NWR, OK; Quivira NWR, KS and Cheyenne Bottoms, KS.

Two cranes were definitely killed in this incident, both males. A third bird was with them. It did not fly for the first week after the shooting. It lingered at Quivira for several weeks, long after all other cranes had left, and did not fly for at least the last week it was seen. It has not been seen at Aransas NWR, so it is

almost certainly dead. It was probably the female.

In the fall of 2004 Quivira had 59 Whooping Cranes visit the refuge. Fewer than 500 Sandhill Crane hunting permits are sold each year in Kansas.

One argument in favor of Sandhill hunting is that it reduces crop depredation by the cranes. Since only about 1,000 cranes are killed in Kansas each year out of 400,000 in the Central flyway, hunting does little to reduce the impact of their presence.

One of our members has pledged a \$500 donation to KDWP, IF they eliminate the Sandhill Crane season. The next meeting of the KDWP commission is March 24 in Beloit. Your letters will have the most impact if they are addressed to the governor and/or the KDWP commissioners.

Governor Kathleen Sebelius
Office of the Governor
Capitol, 300 SW 10th Ave.,
Ste. 212S
Topeka, KS 66612-1590
www.ksgovernor.org/comment.html

KDWP Commissioners:
John R Dykes, Chairman
5641 Tahoe Lane, Fairway, KS 66205
jdkes@kc.rr.com
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51 S. 64th St., Kansas City, KS 66111
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Kelly Johnston
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The State of the Grassland Birds

from Audubon Magazine September/October 2004

More than a quarter of the land in the continental United States is grasslands, primarily consisting of hayfields, pastures, and rangelands but also natural grasslands, such as short, mixed, and tallgrass prairies. Almost half of Alaska is a mix of grass, shrubs, and wetlands called tundra; because dry, grassy tundra is the most dominant type, it is also included here. Grasslands are threatened by overgrazing, conversion to croplands, frequent haying, field abandonment and a lack of fire (both of which encourage woody growth), invasive plants, resource extraction, and urbanization.

Of the 47 grassland bird species, 31 species are doing O.K., six are of moderate concern (yellow watchlist), and ten are of high conservation concern (red watchlist). This is the highest proportion of red WatchList species for any of the major habitat types.

Eastern Meadowlark
Characteristic of grassy fields and prairies, the population of Eastern Meadowlarks has declined by 66% to about 10 million individuals.

Bobolink
The population of the Bobolink,

which nests in hayfields and other northern U.S. grasslands, has fallen to about 11 million birds—half its earlier numbers.

Short-eared Owl

This owl no longer nests in many of the grasslands where it used to breed, and its population has decreased by 69 percent, to about 2.4 million birds.

Greater Prairie Chicken

The Greater Prairie-Chicken has disappeared completely from many states; in only a few of them are the 700,000 birds left stable or increasing in population.