

Wichita Audubon



Volume 38 No. 1 June, July, August 2003

CNC Upcoming Programs

June 14, Saturday 10 - 11 am Wildflower Walk

If you have ever wondered about the native flowers you see in prairies and fields, here is a great chance to learn about them. We will hike the trails in search of spider milkweed, larkspur, ruella, and many others. We will also discuss the traditional uses and edibility of some of the plants.

August 16, Saturday 10-11 am Stream Ecology

Whether you want to cool off or you have a special place in your heart for things that crawl, wiggle or swim, This is the program for the young curious mind. Children will enjoy digging in the mud to get a close-up look at dragonfly nymphs, bloodworms, scuds, and others. The Nature Center will provide containers. Wear old clothes and shoes.

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



June Picnic

Join us for our annual picnic on Tuesday, June 17 at PAWNEE PRAIRIE PARK at the west side picnic shelter. Bring a dish to share and your own service. Iced tea will be provided, or bring your own drink. The west side picnic shelter is located on Pawnee, approximately three blocks east of Maize Road. Note: Pawnee is not a through street. It is possible to reach the picnic shelter from Tyler Road, but far simpler from Maize Rd.

Meritorious Service Award

The recipient of the 2003 Meritorious Service Award is Patty Marlett. Presented at the annual meeting in May, the award honors volunteers who have made outstanding contributions to Wichita Audubon.

Patty has served two terms as president, 1995-1997 and 2001-2003. She has been newsletter editor since 1994, and webmaster since the webpage was first created. She has represented WAS on the Kansas Audubon Council, and currently serves as our representative to the board of Audubon of Kansas. She acts as one half of the Corresponding Secretary position, sending letters of acknowledgement to all our donors
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Coming Events

June 14

Wildflower Walk at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 am to 11 am

June 17

Annual Picnic, 6:00 pm at Pawnee Prairie Park, west side shelter.

New Officers

At the annual meeting in May, the following officers were elected for the 2003-2004 year beginning July 1:

President: Kevin Groeneweg
Vice-President: Carol Cumberland
Secretary: Sharon Bolin
Treasurer: Duane Delong
Director: Gary Straley
Director: Don Dewitt

Be sure to thank these people for all the hard work they are willing to undertake for our organization. And if they call and ask you to help, please say YES!

Meritorious, cont.

and maintaining a database of donors. She serves on the Chaplin Nature Center committee, the development committee, and the field trip committee. She has planned many special events such as Camp Horizon family weekends and extended field trips.

Gump Fund Established

The family of Robert & Edith Gump have established the Edith M & Robert H. Gump Fund for Conservation and Education as a part of our Endowment Fund for Chaplin Nature Center. Dr. Gump was a prominent veterinarian in Wichita. This memorial fund will help make it possible for Chaplin Nature Center to continue its mission of nature education.

Lattner Foundation Grant

The Wichita Audubon Society has received a generous \$10,000 grant from the Forrest C. Lattner Foundation in memory of Forrest C. and Frances H. Lattner, for the construction of a new home for our naturalist at Chaplin Nature Center. The Lattner Foundation has been a generous partner for many years, providing much support for Chaplin Nature Center. Their generosity is greatly appreciated.

Be sure to keep up with the latest news on conservation issues, local issues and events by visiting our website at

Birdathon Success

The two Birdathon teams, CNC and the Painted Buntings, had a very successful year, raising more than \$2500 for Chaplin Nature Center. Here are some highlights from their adventures.

For the last several years, the Painted Buntings (Carol Cumberland, Marsha Ebaugh, Patty Marlett and Gloria Jones-Wolf) have birded the same locations: Chisholm Creek Park, Maple Grove Cemetery, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge and Cheyenne Bottoms. Yet in spite of the consistencies, each time provides new and amazing wildlife viewing.

Chisholm Creek gave us our only Indigo Bunting and Nashville Warbler of the day, and the first of several American Redstarts

At Maple Grove Cemetery Gray Catbirds, Least Flycatchers and Great Crested Flycatchers sang from the wooded eastern perimeter of the cemetery. On a newly discovered path, we flushed an Eastern Screech Owl. A Gray-cheeked Thrush and two Spotted Towhees were seen below the trees west of the creek.

In Oak Park we found the Magnolia Warbler and Blue-headed Vireos. We had seen 9 warblers and 3 vireos as we headed to Quivira.

On Whiteside road we observed thousands of Franklin's Gulls in the air and on the ground as a farmer tilled his field. Our Swainson's Hawk was also seen following a farmer. Who said birds aren't smart?

At Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, we caught an excellent look at a badger patrolling his way through

2003-2004 WAS Officers

President	Kevin Groeneweg	687-4268	kgroeneweg@cox.net
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Gary Straley	620-221-3664	garrob@hit.net
Don Dewitt	722-0742	dondewitt@msn.com

Committee Chairs

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On Wildlife Drive, we accidentally drove over a snake. Hopping out of the car we discovered a massasauga rattlesnake (not injured, but very annoyed). On the Wildlife Drive we observed a Peregrine Falcon on the ground eating a duck. And a large flock of American White Pelicans gave us the most spectacular view of their soaring and landing skills. We observed huge numbers of white-faced ibis this year, too. Moments before we stopped at the Bobolink field, a Green Heron flew from out of a drainage ditch up into a tree, for a magnificent view. Patty laboriously scoped the Bobolink field until she finally spotted one for us.

Our only White Crowned Sparrow was found en route to Cheyenne Bottoms. Arriving at 4:30 pm, we observed good numbers of Stilt Sandpipers and Long-billed Dowitchers. The prairie dog town gave us our Grasshopper Sparrow and several Upland Sandpipers as well as the resident Burrowing Owls. We left Cheyenne Bottoms at sunset. We drove 280 miles and counted bird species for 16 hours. We ended the day with 138 species. Best bird of the day: Patty - Magnolia Warbler, Marsha - American White Pelican, Gloria - American Redstart, Carol - Peregrine Falcon.

Birdathon Highlights from the CNC team:

The 2003 Birdathon started with the meeting of the great minds (Shawn Silliman, Kevin Groeneweg, Rex Herndon) at the Slate Creek Church around 4:00pm on Friday, May 9. At the church we saw several species, including Baltimore oriole, common yellowthroat, and a Harris' sparrow. From the church we drove to the South marsh and entered it from

the west side. Along the way the team added red-headed woodpecker, loggerhead shrike, lark sparrow, eastern and western kingbird and many others. Once inside the marsh we added cormorants, pelicans, numerous Wilson's phalarope, and many more shorebirds. Driving further to the east through the marsh we hit a small rainstorm that produced some hail and confined our team to the car. While birding from the car, and peering through the front window between the moving wiper blades, we spotted four yellow warblers in the middle of the road bathing in a mud puddle. As fun as it was being in the marsh in the middle of a rain shower, it did not seem to be the best idea, so we drove out in search of the solid feel of blacktop. Good thing we were in a 4-wheel drive.

After birding the South marsh we headed over to the North side and as soon as we turned off the car we heard a king rail calling. It was probably no further than 20 feet from us in the marsh grass and we could only get a glimpse of it from time to time. In the South marsh, the wind stopped blowing and the mosquitoes immediately attacked the team. The team trudged on and found a group of 10 black-crowned night herons, and one green heron perched in a tree. With darkness falling the team headed over to Rainbow Bridge to try for owls. At the bridge, we heard the barred owl, followed by the great-horned owl and finally the screech owl. With the first night done, the team had over 80 different species.

The next morning, the team started at 6:30 and headed down to Kaw wildlife area and Silverdale and picked up the northern parula, eastern wood-peewee, brown

thrasher and several other species along the way. After lunch, we headed to Oxford and visited the Mill and the Dennett's property. Wallace helped us find the Barn Owl in the mill and Jack and Norma with a few other species. Our last stop was to drop by the South marsh to search for more waterfowl and still no luck in finding new species. We finished with 107 species.

Most numerous bird - Wilson's phalarope

Most interesting bird - King Rail

Craziest bird - A green heron perching in a tree like a crow

And a big Thank You to everyone who contributed.

Carol Cumberland and Shawn Silliman

Earth Day

A big Thank You to Gary Straley, Sue Robinson, Patty Marlett, Julia Hoppes, Becky Aldridge, Sandra Tholen, Steve Starch, Kevin Groeneweg, Eddie and Savilla Stegall for volunteering at the Wichita Audubon Earth Day booth. This event is sponsored by Boeing and held at the Sedgwick County Zoo. At our booth students were quizzed on the identity of two bird species (a Screech Owl and a Kingfisher), a turkey foot and a turkey egg. We also compared the outstretched arms of over 1500 students to the wing span of a Bald Eagle, an Osprey, and a Franklin's Gull. Each student received a sticker and fact sheet on the bird to which they "Measured Up." More than 12,000 students attended the day's event.

Carol Cumberland, Earth Day chair



**P.O. Box 47607
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PROTECTING MIGRATORY SONGBIRDS

Did you know that the United States Congress has an opportunity to help save threatened and endangered neo-tropical migratory birds like the Kirtland's Warbler, Bicknell's Thrush, Black-capped Vireo, and a species of great concern, the Cerulean Warbler? It's true! They can do so by increasing funding for the Neo-Tropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund - a special program aimed specifically at restoring habitat for neo-tropical migratory birds. You'll recall, the Neo-Tropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act was signed into law three years ago - a first-of-its-kind law that directly impacts songbirds by helping to restore and conserve their wintering

habitat. The law established a \$5 million fund to support partnership programs to enhance habitat in the U.S., as well as the Caribbean and Latin America, where approximately 5 billion birds of 500 species spend their winters - including species that are considered the most endangered birds in North America. For the past several years, Congress has failed to secure the full \$5 million for this program - a miniscule figure, far less than almost any conservation program coordinated through the U.S. Department of the Interior

We need your help to convince both the House & Senate to secure full

funding for this species saving program, to ensure that Neotropical Migratory Birds return to our backyards by protecting their wintering habitat! Communicate with your lawmakers and urge them to fully fund the Neo-Tropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act today! You can visit the website at www.capitolconnect.com/audubon or get more information at 1-800-659-2622.

from the Audubon Advisory, Audubon Public Policy Division.

