

# Wichita Audubon



Volume 43 No. 7 April 2009

## **APRIL MEETING**



Our April program will be presented by Glenn Chambers, a photographer from Missouri who has spent considerable time in Kansas photographing Greater Prairie Chickens. Glenn is president of the Conservation Federation of Missouri, and passionate about wildlife photography. He has spent many years photographing prairie chickens, and now travels to Kansas because they have become so scarce in Missouri. Join us on Tuesday,

April 21, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center for his program. You can also join Glenn and other members for dinner before the program at Doc Greens, 10096 E. 13th, in the Waterfront, at 5:45 p.m.

## **BIRDATHON**

Birdathon is a fund-raising activity that is also a lot of fun. It is open to any member that likes to bird and wants to help. A Birdathon team solicits pledges from friends, neighbors and coworkers for the number of bird species they can find in a 24 hour period. Teams choose a date in late April or early May when migration is at its peak. We would really like to have your help. To join a team talk to Mike Heaney, Carol Cumberland, Patty Marlett, Kevin Groeneweg or Shawn Silliman. If you can't join a team, consider soliciting pledges for one of the teams, or contribute yourself. Any and all assistance is appreciated.

## **CNC UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

**April 4, Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

### **Spring Clean-up**

Volunteer to help get CNC in shape for spring with building cleanup or trail maintenance. Light workloads or heavy, your choice. And while you're at it, enjoy a beautiful spring day in a wonderful natural setting.

## **COMING EVENTS**

### **April 4**

Chautauqua County backroads field trip. Meet at the convenience store on the west edge of Cedarvale at 7:30 a.m. Note that Cedarvale is about 90 miles from Wichita - allow 1.5 - 2 hours to get there. Leader: Pete Janzen, 832-0182, [pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net)

### **April 4**

Spring clean-up at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

### **April 21**

Regular meeting. "Prairie Chickens in Kansas," by Glenn Chambers, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center.

### **April 23**

Boeing Earth Day at the Sedgwick County Zoo. Volunteer to help - call Kevin Groeneweg at 687-4268, [kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net)

### **May 2**

Warbler Walk in Oak Park. Meet by the pond at the north end at 8 a.m. Leader: Paul Griffin, 263-1251, [pgriffin1@cox.net](mailto:pgriffin1@cox.net)

### **May 2**

Prairie Wetlands conservation area. Meet at the OxyChem parking lot on S. Ridge Rd, south of 55 St S. Leader: Bill Beard, 722-3081, [w2bnn@cox.net](mailto:w2bnn@cox.net)



For more information about any Chaplin Nature Center programs call Shawn Silliman at 620-442-4133, or e-mail [cnc@wichitaaudubon.org](mailto:cnc@wichitaaudubon.org). CNC is located 3 miles west of Arkansas City on Hwy 166, north 2 miles on 21st Rd, east 0.6 miles on 272nd Rd.

## **MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD**

The award committee is accepting nominations for the annual Meritorious Service Award. The criteria for selection include outstanding or sustained leadership as a member, officer, committee chair, or special project leader. Please include a brief description of the nominee's accomplishments and why you think they should receive this award. The presentation will be made at the May 19 meeting.

Send your nomination to Dan Kilby, 1220 N. Gow, Wichita 67203, or email [ddkilby@prodigy.net](mailto:ddkilby@prodigy.net)

Previous recipients of this award:

1994 John Wherry	2002 Wallace Champeny
1995 Ralph Wiley & Geula McDonald	2003 Patty Marlett
1996 Nathan McDonald	2004 Carol Cumberland
1997 Louise Wherry	2005 Sandra Tholen
1998 Don Vannoy	2006 Kevin Groeneweg
1999 Bob Gress	2007 Laura Groeneweg
2000 Dan Kilby	2008 Duane DeLong
2001 Rex Herndon	

## **OAK PARK CLEANUP**

A big thank you to the people who came out on March 14 to help with the park cleanup: Eddie Stegall, Cheryl Miller, Dave Welfelt, Pete Janzen, Patty Marlett, Carol Cumberland, Kevin Groeneweg, Bev DuGay, Dwight Corrin, Sheryl VanDoren, Paul Griffin, Rob and Rosa McHenry. We put in 15.5 hours and picked up lots of trash.

## **SLATE OF OFFICERS**

The nominating committee for 2008-2009 is being chaired by Catherine Lewis, with help from Cheryl Miller and Art Weigand. They are seeking candidates for president and vice-president, and two members of the board of directors. Please consider volunteering to help. And if you are asked, please say YES! The election will be held at the meeting on May 19.

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Wichita Audubon is going to provide a booth at the Boeing Earth Day event to be held at the Sedgwick County Zoo on Thursday, April 23, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. We will have a bird quiz and a game where children can compare their arm reach to the wingspans of various species of birds. More than 5,000 area school children from grades 3 - 5 attend this event every year, so we will need help!

If you can volunteer for a few hours please contact Kevin Groeneweg, 687-4268, [kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net)

### **2008-2009 WAS Officers**

President	Kevin Groeneweg	687-4268	<a href="mailto:kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net">kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net</a>
Vice-president	Jay Newton	733-2486	<a href="mailto:jmnewtonus@yahoo.com">jmnewtonus@yahoo.com</a>
Secretary	Patty Marlett	942-2164	<a href="mailto:pmarlett@mac.com">pmarlett@mac.com</a>
Treasurer	Carol Cumberland	685-4867	<a href="mailto:carol.cumberland@swbell.net">carol.cumberland@swbell.net</a>
Directors	Bob Gress	838-4130	<a href="mailto:bobgress@cox.net">bobgress@cox.net</a>
	Mike Heaney	733-6458	<a href="mailto:jeager@southwind.net">jeager@southwind.net</a>
	Dan Kilby	943-5136	<a href="mailto:ddkilby@cox.net">ddkilby@cox.net</a>
	Curt VanBoening	644-1986	<a href="mailto:curtvb@earthlink.net">curtvb@earthlink.net</a>
	Duane DeLong	684-7456	<a href="mailto:dwdelong@earthlink.net">dwdelong@earthlink.net</a>
	Catherine Lewis	681-3362	<a href="mailto:thexchange@cox.net">thexchange@cox.net</a>

### **Committee Chairs**

Newsletter	Patty Marlett	942-2164	<a href="mailto:pmarlett@mac.com">pmarlett@mac.com</a>
CNC	Kevin Groeneweg	687-4268	<a href="mailto:kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net">kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net</a>
Conservation	Curt VanBoening	776-0993	<a href="mailto:curtvb@earthlink.net">curtvb@earthlink.net</a>
Development	Mike Heaney	733-6458	<a href="mailto:jeager@southwind.net">jeager@southwind.net</a>
Programs	Jay Newton	733-2486	<a href="mailto:jmnewtonus@yahoo.com">jmnewtonus@yahoo.com</a>
Membership	Sister Patricia Stanley	613-7059	<a href="mailto:pstanley@csjwichita.org">pstanley@csjwichita.org</a>
Hospitality	Laura Groeneweg	687-4268	<a href="mailto:lgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net">lgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net</a>
Field Trips	Pete Janzen	832-0182	<a href="mailto:pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net">pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net</a>
Finance	Duane DeLong	684-7456	<a href="mailto:dwdelong@earthlink.net">dwdelong@earthlink.net</a>
Naturalist	Shawn Silliman	620-442-4133	<a href="mailto:cnc@wichitaaudubon.org">cnc@wichitaaudubon.org</a>

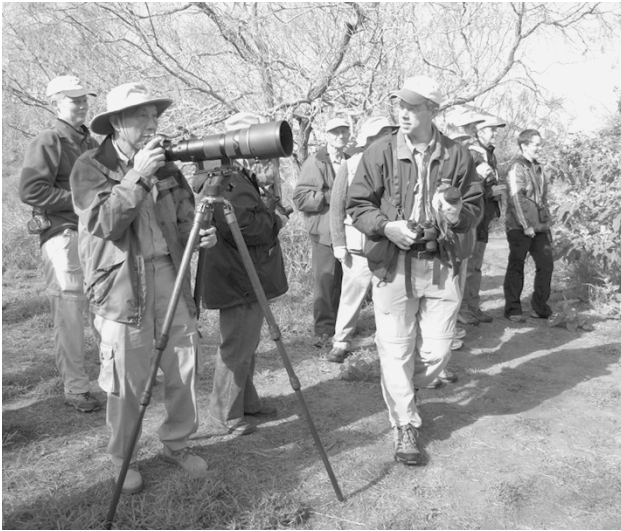
### **WWW.WICHITAAUDUBON.ORG**

E-mail any officer: [was@wichitaaudubon.org](mailto:was@wichitaaudubon.org)

Send address changes to Sister Patricia Stanley, 3700 E Lincoln Apt 233, Wichita 67218  
[pstanley@csjwichita.org](mailto:pstanley@csjwichita.org)

## RIO GRANDE VALLEY EXTENDED FIELD TRIP

Twenty-three birders went on the Wichita Audubon extended field trip to the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Many rode down on the two 15-passenger vans we rented. We left on Saturday, February 21, with a stop at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma in search of



*Watching the Blue Buntings*

the Yellow-billed Loon being seen there, but the wind and cold temperatures sent us in search of warmer weather farther south. On Sunday we had our first taste of the birds of south Texas with a stop at Lake Alice. Anhingas, Green Jays, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds gave us a good warm-up for things to come. We continued on to our destination of Weslaco, searching in vain for Masked Ducks along the way. While we were waiting for Red-crowned Parrots to show up in town, it was great to meet up with long-time members Cliff and Nadine Miller, who are currently enjoying the RV lifestyle in the valley.

On Monday we got an early start for Laguna Atascosa NWR. After much searching, the pair of Blue Buntings that were hanging around put on a great show for all to see. Several of

the valley specialties were seen at the feeders and on the trails. The Bayside Wildlife Drive was closed, so after a stop at the Alligator pond we headed to the Boca Chica beach for some birding on the gulf, getting good looks at White-tailed Hawks along the way. We drove from one end of the beach to the other, seeing lots of Sanderlings and Ruddy Turnstones among other shorebirds, as well as a variety of terns. We then made a late afternoon visit to Sabal Palm Audubon Sanctuary and finished the day trying for Green Parakeets in Brownsville (but settling for Red-crowned Parrots).

We were up even earlier on Tuesday for a pre-dawn visit to Bentsen-RGV SP in search of Common Pauraque and Ferruginous Pygmy-owl. We had a couple of pauraque on the road in as dawn broke, and the owl pleasantly surprised us by tooting mid-morning. We saw our first Green Kingfisher and there were lots of birds at the feeding stations once the staff began filling the feeders, including Altamira Oriole and Clay-colored Thrush. At the headquarters we saw an Allen's Hummingbird coming to a feeder (banded the year before). Next

it was off to Anzalduas County Park, where several species of warblers were seen while we had lunch. Finally, we went to Edinburg Scenic Wetlands. The pond held lots of waders, but the stars among the wonderful native plantings were the Groove-billed Ani and the Pyrrhuloxia.

We had a more leisurely start on Wednesday at Estero Llano Grande SP, where several "zooties" had been showing up. We were guided into a normally closed construction area (along with about 50 other birders) and saw a Tropical Parula and an exotic Black-throated Magpie-jay. The windy conditions prevented us from seeing the Rose-throated Becard hanging out there, however. They also have very cooperative



*The Rio Grande viewed from the Roma Bluffs*

pauraque, with one next to a trail for a close look and photos. Our next stop was Frontera Audubon Thicket in search of the female Crimson-collared Grosbeak. After searching and waiting for some time, she finally revealed herself. Our last stop in the area was at Santa Ana NWR. After hitting the trails (and

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### **Rio Grande Valley Field Trip, continued**

the gift shop) we began the journey to Zapata. We stopped at Roma Bluffs to watch the sun go down, but there were no Muscovy fly-bys.

We began our Thursday morning at Salineno along the Rio Grande. Gray Hawks were flying back and forth across the river. Our two target birds were seen, with a flock of Red-billed Pigeons on an island upriver and a fly-by of a couple of Muscovy Ducks. We walked up the road to the feeders currently maintained by Cheryl Longton. She had seats for all of us and we were treated to an overwhelming spectacle of birds. After tearing ourselves away, we headed over to Falcon SP. We encountered a different community of birds, including Cactus Wren,

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher and Black-throated Sparrow.

It was then on to Zapata to search for the White-collared Seedeater in the city park. We had at least one bird singing, but satisfying looks were elusive. Some of us pressed on as the temperature climbed well into the 90's, while others called it a day.

On Friday we began our journey back to Wichita, but not after getting in some quality birding time. We returned to Falcon SP, where we got decent looks at the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher and Cactus Wren and picked up a number of other species for the trip list. We made one last attempt at the seedeater in Zapata

without success. The heat was coming on, so we pointed the vans north and bid adios to the valley. After fighting our way through Austin we spent the night in Hillsboro.

The next day we finished up the drive to Wichita, with the cold north winds reminding us just how much we enjoyed our stay in the valley. We ended with a total of 193 species for the trip, with lifers for everyone. A big thanks to Pete Janzen for co-leading the trip, Patty Marlett for arranging the accommodations and the vans, and to Brian Addis and Rod Wedel for helping drive the vans. It was a memorable trip for all.

*by Kevin Groeneweg*

**To see lots of pictures from the trip and a complete species list, check out the WAS website at [wichitaaudubon.org](http://wichitaaudubon.org).**