

Wichita Audubon

Volume 42 No. 5 January/February 2008



JANUARY MEETING

Can Penguins Fly? Found out from Joe Barkowski, Curator of Birds at the Sedgwick County Zoo. He will be the speaker for our meeting on January 15, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center. The Cessna Penguin Cove is a recent major addition to the zoo. Joe will tell us all about the exhibit as well as this most unique and fascinating family of birds. You can join Joe for dinner before the program at Jason's Deli, in Bradley Fair at 21st and Rock Road, at 5:45 p.m.



FEBRUARY MEETING

Ken Lockwood, a certified wildlife rehabilitator, will bring live owls for a program describing their lives and their role in the environment. The program will be held on February 19, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center. As always, we will have dinner with the speaker before the program at Jason's Deli, in Bradley Fair at 21st and Rock Road, at 5:45 p.m.

CNC UPCOMING PROGRAMS

January 26 and February 2, Saturday 10 a.m. to noon

Mid-winter is a great time to see Bald Eagles in Kansas. Since they mostly eat fish, eagles move south in winter searching for open water. We will take a one and a half mile hike down to the Arkansas River to search for our national bird. If you have binoculars, bring them. The nature center has some binoculars to loan and will provide a spotting scope.



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

COMING EVENTS

January 15

Regular meeting, "Can Penguins Fly?," by Joe Barkowski, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center

January 26

Eagle Watch at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 a.m. to noon.

January 26

Wichita Area Mystery Trip. Meet at the Redstone Grill, 5355 N. Broadway at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast, departure at 8 a.m. Leader: Kevin Groeneweg, 687-4268, kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net

February 2

Eagle Watch at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 a.m. to noon

February 9

Lyon County Lake & John Redmond Reservoir Field Trip
See page 2

February 19

Regular meeting, "Owls: Nature's Mystery," by Ken Lockwood, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center.

March 8

Oak Park Cleanup - meet by the north pond at 9 a.m.
Leader: Rosa McHenry, 263-4042, mchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net

New Displays at CNC

The first phase of construction for the new educational displays at Chaplin Nature Center has been completed by the staff of the Kauffman Museum in North Newton. We have new carpet upstairs and down, new track lighting and skylights, and the framework for all the new displays. Work continues on the design and preparation of all the content for the displays. The picture at right shows the northeast corner of the main room of the Visitor's Center. The plan is to have work completed by the end of March, followed by an open house to celebrate the new look, so watch for an announcement of the big event.



Lyon County Lake Field Trip

Our field trip on February 9 will meet at 8:30 a.m. at McDonald's in Emporia, 2810 W. 18th. To reach that McDonald's exit the Turnpike at Emporia, exit 127, then go north on I-35. Take Exit 128 at Industrial Road and turn left (north). Turn left at 18th street, the McDonald's is on the right. We will search for Smith's

Longspurs and Long-eared Owls at Lyon County State Lake, then proceed on to Melvern and John Redmond Reservoirs for waterfowl, raptors, gulls and other winter birds. Bring a lunch, and dress warmly!

Leaders: Bob Gress, 838-4130, bobgress@cox.net & Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com

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E-mail any officer: was@wichitaudubon.org

Send address changes to Sister Patricia Stanley, 6739 Perryton, Wichita, KS 67226
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BIRD SEED SALE

Help support Wichita Audubon and Chaplin Nature Center by buying your bird seed from us. We offer high quality seed, delivered to your home (within Wichita City limits.) Please submit your order by

Thursday, January 10.

The seed will be delivered on

Saturday, January 19

25 lbs Black Oil Sunflower - \$14

25 lbs Audubon Mix - \$12

We've had to increase the price due to a raise in the cost from our supplier. High fuel costs are taking their toll.

Order by phone, mail or E-mail. Call Carol Cumberland at 685-4867 or carol.cumberland@swbell.net Mail: Wichita Audubon Society, PO Box 47607, Wichita, KS 67201.

Common Birds in Decline

Audubon's unprecedented analysis of forty years of citizen-science bird population data from Christmas Bird Counts plus the Breeding Bird Survey reveals the alarming decline of many of our most common and beloved birds.

Since 1967 the average population of the common birds in steepest decline has fallen by 68 percent; some individual species nose-dived as much as 80 percent. All 20 birds on the national Common Birds in Decline list lost at least half their populations in just four decades. The findings point to serious problems with both local habitats and national environmental trends. Only citizen action can make a difference for the birds and the state of our future.

The wide variety of birds affected is reason for concern. Populations of meadowlarks and other farmland birds are diving because of suburban sprawl, industrial development, and the intensification of farming over the past 50 years. Greater Scaup and other tundra-breeding birds are succumbing to dramatic changes to their breeding habitat as the permafrost melts earlier and more temperate predators move north in a likely response to global warming. Boreal forest birds like the Boreal Chickadee face deforestation from increased insect outbreaks and fire, as well as excessive logging, drilling, and mining.

The one distinction these common species share is the potential to become uncommon unless we all take action to protect them and their habitat.

The Top Twenty Percent Decline

#1 Northern Bobwhite	82%
#2 Evening Grosbeak	78%
#3 Northern Pintail	77%
#4 Greater Scaup	75%
#5 Boreal Chickadee	73%
#6 Eastern Meadowlark	72%
#7 Common Tern	71%
#8 Loggerhead Shrike	71%
#9 Field Sparrow	68%
#10 Grasshopper Sparrow	65%
#11 Snow Bunting	64%
#12 Black-throated Sparrow	63%
#13 Lark-Sparrow	63%
#14 Common Grackle	61%
#15 American Bittern	59%
#16 Rufous Hummingbird	58%
#17 Whip-poor-will	57%
#18 Horned Lark	56%
#19 Little Blue Heron	54%
#20 Ruffed Grouse	54%

What You Can Do

Protect Local Habitat

Join Audubon and other groups to protect and restore habitats close to home.

Promote Sound Agricultural Policy

This has enormous impact on grassland birds and habitat, including Northern Bobwhites and Eastern Meadowlarks. Promoting strong conservation provisions in the federal Farm Bill and Conservation Reserve Program can help to protect millions of acres of vital habitat.

Support Sustainable Forests

The Boreal Forest in the Northern U.S. and Canada is essential breeding territory for many species of birds, including Evening Grosbeaks. Federal and state legislations promoting sustainable forest management will help fight habitat loss from inappropriate logging, mining, and drilling.

Protect Wetlands

Support for local, state and federal wetlands conservation programs is essential to protect a wide array of species

Fight Global Warming

The decline of common birds is just one impact of global warming's mounting threat to people and wildlife around the world.

Individual energy conservation along with strong federal, state, and local legislation to cap greenhouse emissions can help to curb its worst consequences.

Combat Invasive Species

Invasive non-native species disrupt the delicate ecological balance that sustains birds and other wildlife. Federal, regional, state, and local regulations are needed to combat this growing environmental threat.

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Grants Received

Wichita Audubon has received three grants in support of the new exhibits at Chaplin Nature Center. Wichita Greyhound Charities has awarded us \$1,375. The Westar Energy Green Team has announced that they will match up to \$5,000 for the new exhibits. The National Audubon Society has given a Collaborative Funding Grant of \$1,469. And our own board of directors have personally donated a total of \$8,600 for this project. A big thank you to everyone for this big investment in our future.

