

Wichita Audubon



Volume 48 No. 6 March 2014

MARCH MEETING



Join us on Tuesday, March 18, 7 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center as Dr. Mary Liz Jameson of W.S.U. presents “Exploration of the Micro-world: Insects in Kansas and Beyond.”

Dr. Jameson is an associate professor of biology at W.S.U. and a biodiversity scientist whose research focuses on evolutionary patterns and species diversity. She will tell us about insects and explain host plant interactions and their response to climate change.

You can join Dr. Jameson and other members for dinner before the meeting at Panera at Central and Hillside at 5:30 p.m.

COMING EVENTS

March 7

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

March 18

Regular meeting, 7 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center. Program: “Explorations of the Micro-world: Insects in Kansas and Beyond” by Dr. Mary Liz Jameson.

March 22

Harvey County West field trip. Meet at the main stone shelter house in the Harvey County West Park at 2 p.m. Bring a dish to share for a picnic supper. After touring local wetlands we’ll look for Woodcock. Leaders: Cheryl Miller, avian 67226@gmail.com and Rod Wedel, redb819@sbcglobal.net

April 5

CNC Spring Clean-up
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

April 12

Chautauqua County Back Roads field trip. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Dillon’s parking lot at Andover Rd & US 400 and we’ll carpool from there. Bring a lunch. Leader: Kevin Groeneweg, kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net.

CHAPLIN NATURE CENTER UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Friday, March 7, 7 - 8 p.m. Night Hike

Don’t be afraid of the dark! Participants will be hiking through the woods *without* flashlights to learn about our senses in the absence of light. The group will listen for night sounds and nocturnal animals while on the trail. Dress for the outdoors and wear sturdy shoes.

Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Spring Clean-up

Help us get the Chaplin Nature Center facilities ready for the upcoming year. Volunteers are needed in all areas, from building clean-up to trail maintenance. Light workloads or heavy, your choice. There is a place you can help out 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@wichitaudubon.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.

HARVEY COUNTY WEST FIELD TRIP

Join us on Saturday, March 22, on a hunt for Woodcock. Since those birds don't start their courtship display until dusk, we thought we would spend the late afternoon touring some of the wetlands in the vicinity, then share a picnic supper and wait for the Woodcock to show. Meet at the main stone shelter house at Harvey County Park West at 2 p.m., and bring a dish to share for the picnic. The trip leaders are Cheryl Miller, avian67226@gmail.com and Rod Wedel, redb819@spcglobal.net



Rex Herndon points out a Bald Eagle to Bella Wood along the Arkansas River at the Chaplin Nature Center Eagle Watch on January 25.



2013-2014 WAS Officers

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E-mail any officer: was@wichitaudubon.org

Send address changes to Tom Ewert, 1021 N. Lakewind, Wichita, KS 67212, trewert@yahoo.com

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee is looking for a few good volunteers! We have the following positions to fill for the 2014-2015 year: vice-president, secretary, treasurer (all one year positions) and three members of the board of directors. Two of the board of director positions are for three years, one is for one year. If you are interested in serving, or have suggestions please contact Pete Janzen, 519-1979, pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net or Dan Kilby, 943-5136, ddkilby@cox.net.

WICHITA AUDUBON: 60 YEARS OF MEMORIES

2014 marks the 60th anniversary of the Wichita Audubon Society. The following article is a reminiscence on the early years of the group written by Ralph Wiley in 1994, when WAS was celebrating its 40th anniversary. Ralph was a charter member of Wichita Audubon; a leader and activist for forty years. He served as president, as an officer of the Kansas Audubon Council, as a board member, committee chairman and field trip leader. He died in 1995, just a few months after completing this memoir.

This is one person's memory of forty years with the Wichita Audubon Society. Like Rome, this fine organization wasn't built in a day!

The current WAS was chartered in 1954 by the National Audubon Society. Dr. J. Walker Butin was elected president. (Editors note: Dr. Butin and Dan Kilby are the only surviving charter members.) The first big event occurred in 1956 when the board decided to bring the Audubon WildLife Tours to Wichita. These were the very best nature films of the day and personally narrated by the photographers. It was a bold move since it was necessary to advance a sizable amount of money, secure and pay for auditorium space, and sell large numbers of tickets to break even. Genibelle Watson, a school teacher, agreed to chair this endeavor. From the first these events were widely accepted and the nightly audience grew from a few hundred to a high of nearly 2,000 in the late 1960's. Marjorie Marshall took over as chair for the film series in the mid-sixties and served for many years. The films continued for twenty-seven years, until 1983, when rising costs and competition from television brought them to an end.

Another big dream began in the 1960's. Geneva Kinkaid, a retired school teacher who loved to teach children about the world of nature, wanted WAS to develop and operated a nature center. Geneva and Dean Love, along with many others, worked hard

to come up with a place and plan. Unfortunately, Geneva died before her dream was realized, but she left her estate to WAS for this purpose. Dean Love was transferred back east. Oscar Ryan, best remembered as a caretaker of injured birds, also died and left his estate to WAS for the purchase of a nature center. Fortunately, there were others to carry on the idea. In May of 1973, Geula McDonald, Don Vannoy, Ralph Wiley and Ron Klataske met with Stedman and Hazel Chaplin and reached an agreement to purchase their farm for \$50,000. Payments were to be completed by 1984. What a great day in the life of the Wichita Audubon Society!

In 1969 or 1979, plans were initiated for a three day family weekend at Camp Horizon for Audubon members and friends. The format for the first event, held on Mother's Day weekend, was developed by Dan Kilby and Mary and Ralph Wiley at the Wiley's kitchen table and changed very little over the next thirty years. Mary Wiley was the key to its continuity, and acted as secretary-treasurer and registrar. It was a tremendously popular event, especially with children. The boys of one family insisted it was at least as good as Christmas. (Editor's note: The last Camp Horizon weekend was held in 2001.)

The late sixties and early seventies brought even more growth and activity in membership, programming and environmental action. There was an influx of youth who challenged the adult members in birding and environmental issues. A few names that some will recognize include Larry Gray, Kenn Kauffman and Jeff Cox.

Development of Chaplin Nature Center was undertaken. The Board of Directors provided \$5000 for a complete study and development plan for the Center. It was completed by the National Nature Center Division in 1975.

Members such as Nathan McDonald and Walter Broderson headed activities in trail development:



Ralph Wiley

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Wichita Audubon: 60 Years of Memories, continued

building bridges and toilets, marking and improving trails. Others developed and carried out fall and spring programs, developed trail brochures, etc. Louis and Carolee Bussjaeger, both teachers, raised \$10,000 and conducted several summer camps. The Fall Field Day was initiated in the early 1970's and continues to be an important day in the life of the Chapter.

The Chapter relied on the management and organizational skills of David Zeh and Bev Hodges to help guide the direction of the Society. It should be recorded that Albert Briggs and Don Vannoy over many years guided our finances. Their documentation and records were invaluable when the chapter decided to enlarge the

purpose of the Nature Center with an Interpretative Center.

The annual Christmas Bird Counts began the same year as the Chapter. Wallace Champeny was the compiler for the Wichita count for decades, and Don Vannoy headed the Arkansas City Count. Editor's note: both counts have continued to the present, with Kevin Groeneweg taking over for

Wally and Gene Young replacing Don Vannoy. The number of counts our members lead and/or participate in has grown tremendously through the years.

Future editions of this newsletter will feature more of Ralph's memories, followed by a summary of the most recent twenty years of our history.



Louis Bussjaeger and Hazel Chaplin in 1978