W I C H I T A

Audubon

Vol. 66 No. 4 November/December 2026

November Program at the Sedgwick County Zoo

Our program this month will be "Recovery of Grassland Birds in the Great Plains through Restoration of Native Keystone Species," by Henry S. Pollock.

Grassland birds are the most rapidly declining group of birds across North America, with population declines of more than 50% since 1970. One of the main drivers of grassland bird declines has been the widespread loss of native keystone species of the Great Plains, such the American bison, American beaver, and black-tailed prairie dog. In this talk, Dr. Henry Pollock will present a sweeping ecological history of the Great Plains, tracing the declines of the Great Plains keystones since 1800 and their implications for grassland bird conservation. He will also discuss his current role as Executive Director of the Southern Plains Land Trust (SPLT), whose mission is to create and rewild a network of shortgrass prairie preserves across the Southern Great Plains, and SPLT's current efforts to help recover grassland bird populations in Southeast Colorado.

Henry has a background in ecology and conservation with a strong focus on quantitative, data-driven science and practice. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Ecology, Evolution, & Conservation Biology and 15+ years' experience as a wildlife biologist and academic researcher. He is dedicated to gaining ground for prairie wildlife and continuing to expand SPLT's reach throughout the Southern Plains to bring back the "American Serengeti".

Join us at 7 pm on Tuesday, November 17. Don't forget that we are holding our meetings at the Cargill Learning Center at the Sedgwick County Zoo. You can join us for dinner with the speaker at Jason's Deli, 7447 W 21st St N at 5:30 pm.

As always, a recording of the program will be available on YouTube (@wichitaaudubonsociety4372) the next day.

Upcoming Events

Information about all our activities is available on our website. You can download a copy of our 2026-27 Schedule of Events here.

November 7, 8 am Saturday Bird & Wildlife walk at Chaplin Nature Center

Join us for a bird and wildlife walk lasting 1 – 1.5 hours, weather permitting. Meet in the visitor's center. Wildlife photographers and beginning birders welcome! Ages 7 and up suggested due to the length of the walk.

For more information or to RSVP call or text Eden Johnson at 620-442-4133, or e-mail cnc@wichitaaudubon.org.

November 7, Saturday, 10 am Chaplin Nature Center Young Birders' Club

This group is open to all kids aged 8 - 17. Learn to navigate trails and wildlife habitats. Gain bird identification and outdoor skills. Build self-confidence. Participate in citizen science and conservation projects. Meets monthly on rotating Saturdays and Sundays. Bring binoculars (some available for use), comfortable walking shoes, water bottle and snacks, notebook, sunscreen, bug spray.

Sign up by call/text Eden Johnson at 620-442-4133 or email cnc@wichitaaudubon.org.

You're invited to learn more about Monarchs!

WSU is presenting two lectures about Monarch Butterflies as part of theiWatkins Visiting Professorship Lecture Series.

Technical Lecture

Monarch butterflies in a changing landscape: Habitat, stressors, and migration

4 p.m., Nov. 9, 2026, 231 Hubbard Hall

Public lecture

Monarch conservation: What can we learn from tagging monarch butterflies?

7 p.m., Nov. 10, 2026, 208 Hubbard Hall

Kristen Baum, PhD, is the director of Monarch Watch, a senior scientist with the Kansas Biological Survey, and a professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Kansas. Monarch Watch is an education, conservation, and research program that focuses on the monarch butterfly, its habitat, and its spectacular fall migration. Baum's research focuses on the effects of land use, management practices, and environmental factors on monarchs and other pollinators. Baum has served on numerous state, regional, national, and international working groups to support monarch and pollinator conservation efforts. Baum is actively involved with efforts supporting STEM education, facilitating student research, and making science accessible to the general public.

November 14, 8 am Second Saturday bird walk in Chisholm Creek Park

Expect 1-2 miles of walking on paved paths for about 90 minutes. No experience is necessary - beginners are welcome! Meet in the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot at 8 am. *Questions? Pete Janzen, pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net, 316-519-1970*

November 21, Saturday, 6:30 am Lyon State Fishing Lake & Melvern Reservoir

Meet at the Dillon's at Woodlawn and 37th St N to carpool. Lyon SFL has been a traditional location for Smith's Longspurs for many years and we will attempt to find them. After birding the lake, we will go to Melvern Reservoir in search of waterfowl, loons, gulls, raptors, sparrows and more.
Leaders: Jeff Tyson, 316-210-2982, jeff@tyloris.com & Kevin Groenweg 316-706-9116, kgroenweg1616@gmail.com

December 19, Saturday, 1-3 pm

Ornament decorating and meet the Grinch - a CNC holiday event. Watch the CNC Facebook page fore more information or *call/text Eden Johnson at 620-442-4133 or email cnc@wichitaaudubon.org.*

Christmas Bird Counts

These annual events are all-day efforts to census all birds in an established 15-mile diameter circle. Volunteers count every bird they see or hear all day. It's not just a species tally—all birds are counted, giving an indication of the total number of birds in the circle that day. All help is welcome. You don't have to count all day - just let the compiler know your plans.

If your home is within the boundaries of a CBC circle, then you can stay at home and report the birds that visit your feeder on count day as long as you have made prior arrangement with the count compiler. Results are reported to the National Audubon Society and the Kansas Ornithological Society.

I**nform the compiler if you plan to attend.** That allows them to plan routes and to contact you in case cancellation is necessary. Remember to dress for the weather and expect to do a fair amount of walking. There may or may not be in-person compilations at the end of the day. You can find still more counts on the Kansas Ornithological Society webpage at www.KSBirds.org.

December 15, Tuesday, 7:30 am El Dorado CBC
Meet at the McDonald's on Central in El Dorado. Contact the compiler via e-mail or text if you are planning to attend.
Compiler: Vickie Cikanek, 785-501-0867, vickie.cikanek@ks.gov

December 15, Tuesday, 7:30 am Quivira NWR
Meet at the Quivira headquarters.
Compiler: Mike Rader, 785-658-5890, mike_rader@hotmail.com

December 16, Wednesday, 7:30 am Red Hills CBC
Meet at the Casey's General Store, 314 S. Iliff St in Medicine Lodge. Groups will depart at 7:30 am.
Compiler: Pete Janzen, 316-249-3550, pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net

December 17, Thursday, 8 am Sedan CBC
Meet at Subway / convenience store in Sedan at 301 W Main St. Contact the compiler via e-mail or text if you are planning to attend so she can have a head count. *Compiler: Vickie Cikanek, 785-501-0867, vickie.cikanek@ks.gov*

December 19, Saturday, 7:30 am Wichita Christmas Bird Count
Meet at the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot. No compilation this year due to the closing of the nature center.
Compiler: Kevin Groeneweg, 316-706-9116, kgroeneweg1616@gmail.com

December 19, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. Halstead-Newton CBC
Meet at the Kauffman Museum in North Newton.
Compiler: Lorna Habegger-Harder, lornajhh@gmail.com

December 20, Sunday, 7:30 am Winfield-Udall CBC
Meet at the Beech Science Center, Southwestern College in Winfield.
Compiler: Max Thompson, 620-221-1856, maxt@cox.net

December 22, Tuesday, 8 am Slate Creek CBC
Meet at the Slate Valley Baptist Church, 7 miles south of Oxford on the main road. (S. Oxford Rd and E 80th St.)
Compiler: Gene Young, 620-660-0547, youngg6264@yahoo.com

December 27, Sunday, 8 am Arkansas City CBC
Meet at Newman Park on Hwy 77 just north of the Arkansas River.
Compiler: Gene Young, 620-660-0547, youngg6264@yahoo.com

December 29, Tuesday, 8 am Marion CBC
Meet in the parking lot of the Tabor College Welcome Center.
Compiler: Jim Nickel, 620-983-8001, jbnickelk2a@gmail.com

December 31, Thursday, Dodge City CBC
Compiler: Jeff Calhoun, 316-737-1307, *jeffcalhoun11@gmail.com*