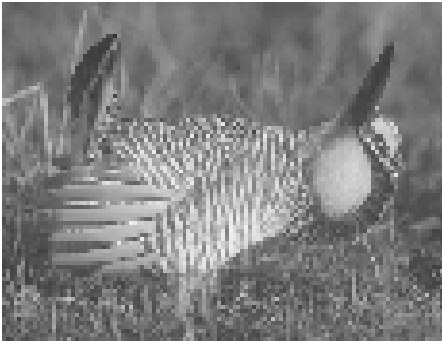


# Wichita Audubon

Volume 41 No. 3 October 2006



## OCTOBER MEETING



Join us for "Greater Prairie Chickens: their dazzling proclamation of spring," another great film by Lowell Wilder, wildlife videographer. Dr. Wilder followed Bob Gress, Director of the Great Plains Nature Center, and Charlie Cope, wildlife biologist with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, on a field trip to the Flint Hills. With them, we will get a close up view of prairie chickens

booming and their amazing mating ritual.

The program will be presented on October 17, 7:30 p.m., at the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th and Woodlawn. You can also join Dr. Wilder for dinner before the meeting at Jason's Deli, 21st and Rock Road, at 5:45 p.m.

## CALENDARS

The 2007 bird calendars are here, and they feature gorgeous pictures of some of your favorite birds. They will sell for \$5 apiece, the profits benefiting your Audubon chapter and Chaplin Nature Center. Consider giving them as Christmas gifts for neighbors, teachers, or the mailman. You can purchase them at meetings, or contact Rosa McHenry, 263-4042, [rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net).

A big thank you to Dr. Tom Gray, who is our number one calendar salesman. Every year he sells at least forty to help support CNC!

## CNC UPCOMING PROGRAMS

### **Saturday, October 28, 7 - 8 p.m., Night Hike**

Who is afraid of the dark? We'll be hiking through the woods without flashlights to learn about our five senses. We'll listen to night sounds and learn about those intriguing nocturnal animals while on the trail. Dress for the outdoors and wear sturdy boots.



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.

## COMING EVENTS

### **October 7**

Field trip at Chisholm Creek Park. Meet in the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot at 8 a.m. Leader: Rosa McHenry, 263-4042, [rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net)

### **October 14**

Cleanup of Chisholm Creek Park. Meet in the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot at 9 a.m. and bring gloves. Leader: Patty Marlett, 942-2164, [pmarlett@mac.com](mailto:pmarlett@mac.com)

### **October 17**

Regular meeting: "Greater Prairie Chickens: their Dazzling Proclamation of Spring," by Lowell Wilder, 7:30 p.m. Great Plains Nature Center

### **October 28**

Field trip to Cheney Reservoir. Meet at the boat ramp at the west end of the dam at 8 a.m. Leader: Pete Janzen, 832-0182, [pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net)

### **October 28**

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

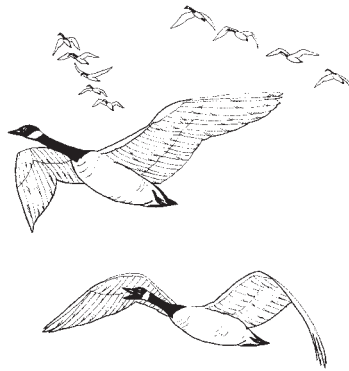
### **November 11**

Field trip to Quivira NWR to see cranes & geese - see page 2.

## CRANES & GEESE AT QUIVIRA

Mark your calendars now for Saturday, November 11. Every year at this time thousands of migrating birds stop at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge to refuel on their journey south. Watching the Sandhill Cranes and geese (Canada, Snow, Ross's and White-fronted) as they stream in to the Big Salt Marsh to roost for the night is a spectacle worthy of the Serengeti. We are going to meet at the Quivira headquarters at 3 p.m. and then make a leisurely drive to the Wildlife drive to arrive just before sunset. If we're really lucky there will be a Whooping Crane among the Sandhills.

Leader: Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com.



## HELP CLEAN UP CHISHOLM CREEK PARK

Wichita Audubon has adopted Chisholm Creek Park, and one of our obligations is to give service to the park. We are having a clean up day to pick up trash on Saturday, October 8, at 9 a.m. in the parking lot of the Great Plains Nature Center. If you can come for even 30 minutes it would help. We will provide trash bags and pick up sticks. Gloves and long pants are recommended. If you can't make it on that day, consider doing some litter pickup on your own - just let us know so we can report our volunteer hours. For more information call Patty Marlett, 942-2164, or email pmarlett@mac.com.

**KEEP UP TO DATE AT OUR WEBSITE:  
WWW.WICHITAAUDUBON.ORG**

### 2006-2007 WAS Officers

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Finance	Duane DeLong		
Naturalist	Shawn Silliman	620-442-4133	cnc@wichitaaudubon.org

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email any officer: was@wichitaaudubon.org

Send address changes to Sister Patricia Stanley, 6739 Perryton, Wichita, KS 67226 pstanley@csjwichita.org

## EXTENDED FIELD TRIP

The extended field trip this year will be to southwest Colorado. We'll be searching for the specialties from the area: Black Swift, Chukar, Flammulated Owl, Gray Vireo, Virginia's Warbler, and many others. Sign up at the meetings or contact one of the trip leaders if you are interested and we will keep you informed as plans progress.

Pete Janzen is planning the itinerary. He can be reached at 832-0182, or email pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net.

Patty Marlett is planning logistics like lodging. She can be reached at 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com.

## NEWS FROM AUDUBON OF KANSAS

### **Mt. Mitchell Becomes Audubon of Kansas Preserve**

Audubon of Kansas has received title to an historic 31-acre prairie south of Wamego to be known as the Mr. Mitchell Heritage Prairie. In partnership with the Kansas State Historical Society, community leaders in Wamego and Wabaunsee County, Audubon of Kansas is developing a plan for increased public visitation and educational use of this exceptionally scenic and ecologically outstanding prairie overlooking the Kansas River valley.

William Izott Mitchell bequeathed the property to the Kansas State Historical Society in 1953 as a monument to Captain William Mitchell (the donor's father) and the Connecticut Kansas Colony. This famous company of New England emigrants came to Kansas in 1856 to assure its entry into the Union as a Free State. Soon after their arrival they merged with earlier settlers to form the Wabaunsee Town company. They formed a militia named the Prairie Guards, electing captain Mitchell as their leader. In August of 1856 they were called to the defense of Lawrence and manned breastworks on Mt. Oread for six weeks. Many of their members participated in the crucial events of the "Bleeding Kansas" period of our history.

### **Protecting the Flint Hills**

AOK drafted a bill designed to establish state siting standards for industrial windpower developments. It was introduced in both houses of the Kansas legislature and has

helped facilitate discussion among elected officials regarding the need for regulatory oversight. AOK Executive Director Ron Klataske and Board Chairman Dick Seaton are active in many initiatives designed to discourage development in unfragmented prairies. We are part of partnerships with Tallgrass Ranchers, the Flint Hills Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Foundation and others working hard to protect the Flint Hills and Smoky Hills.

### **Protecting Prairie Dogs**

In January we prepared a bill that was introduced in the House Agriculture Committee designed to repeal the antiquated century-old statutes that are used to force township and county officials to mandate that landowners eradicate prairie dogs on their property with poison. We strongly believe that landowners should have the right to maintain native wildlife on their own land. Members of five ranch families testified in favor of the bill, which was also supported by other conservation organizations, the Kansas Rifle Association, the Kansas Farmers Union and others.

### **Black-footed Ferrets**

AOK began working last summer with five families in Logan County who have 6,000 acres of prairie dog colonies on their combined 26,000 acres of land. AOK Executive Director Ron Klataske immediately recognized the unique potential of

this complex. These ranches have an incredible diversity and abundance of wildlife including swift foxes, burrowing owls, ferruginous hawks, golden eagles and pronghorn. It was apparent that these ranches could be a the most promising site for reintroduction of Black-footed Ferrets anywhere south of South Dakota. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with KSU and FSHU researchers, are now working diligently to pursue this opportunity. Reintroduction of as many as 40 Black-footed ferrets could be initiated by the fall of 2007.

AOK has secured an \$83,000 grant to assist the ranchers in managing their prairie dog colonies in a manner that will help restrict expansion onto adjacent land where they are not welcome. Hopefully this will reduce or eliminate the prospect that county officials will mandate eradication.

### **Advocacy for Improved USDA Practices**

AOK continues to urge the Kansas Technical Committee and NRCS officials to avoid and/or limit expenditures of tax dollars to subsidize aerial and broadcast spraying of herbicides on native grasslands in Kansas. It is done under the banner of "brush control" with funding available through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Controlled burning and mechanical removal are far superior and do not destroy the native legumes and forbs vital to Prairie Chickens, Bobwhite

*continued on page 4*

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## **AUDUBON OF KANSAS UPDATE, CONTINUED**

Quail and other grassland birds. We actively support the highly beneficial Conservation Reserve Program and the Grassland Reserve Program.

### **Tallgrass Prairie Parkway Wildlife and Natural Heritage Trail guide a Great Success**

AOK wrote and designed this map, which was printed in conjunction with the Kansas Department of Transportation. With 75,000 brochures printed and being circulated, the trail guides have proved popular and useful for visitors and residents alike.

### **Hutton Sanctuary**

The 5,000 acre Hutton Niobrara Sanctuary is located along the Niobrara River on the northern edge of the Sandhills in Nebraska. With funds from the sanctuary endowment and a Stewardship Grant we have replanted native grasses and wildflowers on 150 acres of former field, and have removed cedars from hundreds of acres of grassland as part of our plan to preserve and restore prairie. The first breeding bird survey was conducted this spring by John Schukman of Leavenworth. Sixty-six species of nesting birds

were identified, including Upland Sandpipers, Long-billed Curlew, Sedge Wren, Ovenbird, American Redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak and Bobolink. AOK has also acquired an additional 160 acres with a four bedroom house that can be used as a guest house for members and visitors.

