

Wichita Audubon

Volume 41 No. 2 September 2006



SEPTEMBER MEETING

Join us September 17 for our first program of the season: "Growth of the Winter Population of Canada Geese in Wichita, Kansas." Dr. Alan Maccarone, a biology professor at Friends University, and Charles Cope, a wildlife biologist for the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, will co-present the results of an ongoing study that has followed the growth of the winter population of Canada geese in Wichita since 1983. Their long-term study attempts to address the question of how high the Canada goose population might actually reach. They will address both the "biological" and "social" carrying capacities of urban wildlife populations. The meeting will be on Tuesday, Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th and Woodlawn. You can also join the speakers for dinner at Jason's Deli, in Bradley Fair at 21st and Rock Rd, at 5:45 p.m.

IN MEMORY OF NATHAN McDONALD

NATHAN H. McDONALD, a patriarch of the Wichita Audubon Society, passed away August 10, 2006. He had been an active member of the Wichita chapter since the early 1950's as well as a generous contributor of financial support for the Chaplin Nature Center and the Wichita Audubon Society.

Nathan was a man of vision who recognized the potential of the Chaplin farm for use as a nature center. Through his prior acquaintance with Hazel and Stedman Chaplin, he was influential in reaching an agreement with the Chaplin family to sell their farm to the Wichita Audubon Society for conversion to a nature center to be named "The Chaplin Nature Center."

During the early stages of this transformation Nathan contributed countless

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CNC UPCOMING PROGRAMS

September 23, Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Join us for a day long celebration of nature at the Chaplin Nature Center. There are bird walks, a herp walk, a live herp demonstration and crafts for kids. We will also be tagging Monarch butterflies. Monarchs are our only migratory butterfly, traveling each fall to wintering grounds in the mountains of Mexico.

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COMING EVENTS

September 16

Quivira NWR/Cheyenne Bottoms field trip. Meet at Quivira NWR Headquarters at 8 a.m. and bring lunch. Leader: Kevin Groeneweg, 687-4268, kgroeneweg@sbcglobal.net

September 19

Regular program. "Growth of the Winter Population of Canada Geese in Wichita," by Alan Maccarone & Charles Cope. 7:30 p.m. at the Great Plains Nature Center

September 23

Fall Nature Day & Butterfly tagging at Chaplin Nature Center, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

October 7

Chisholm Creek Park field trip. Meet in the parking lot of the Great Plains Nature Center at 8 a.m. Leader: Rosa McHenry, 263-4042, rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net

October 14

Chisholm Creek Park cleanup. Meet at the Great Plains Nature Center parking lot at 9 a.m. Bring gloves - trash bags provided. Leader: Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com



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.

NATHAN McDONALD, CONTINUED

house of volunteer labor and the loan of his tools and equipment during trail development, construction of foot bridges, and clearing of timber from the area that is now Kingfisher Pond. He helped convert the garage into a laundry room and replumbed the Naturalist's residence with copper pipe. He helped with the construction of a two bedroom addition to the house and building of the spillway for the dam at Kingfisher Pond. Nathan also contributed his expertise in plumbing and understanding of HVAC systems during design and construction of the Visitor' Center.

Nathan was an avid birder and faithfully participated in field trips and other activities of the Wichita Audubon Society until limited by health problems. The Meritorious Service Award of the Wichita Audubon Society was presented to Nathan in 1996.

A memorial fund has been established with the Wichita Audubon Society, P.O. Box 47607, Wichita, KS. 67201



Kevin Groeneweg, Don Vannoy, Nathan & Geula McDonald at the first Twilight Dinner. in 2000.

CALENDARS

The 2007 bird calendars are here. They will sell for \$5 apiece. You can purchase them at meetings, or contact Rosa McHenry, 263-4042, rmchenryphoto@sbcglobal.net

CHISHOLM CREEK PARK

CLEANUP

Chisholm Creek is one of two parks we have adopted. Each fall we pick up trash to make the park a better environment for birds and birders. Meet in the parking lot of the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th and Woodlawn, on Saturday, October 14, 9 a.m. Bring gloves - trash bags and tools will be provided. If you can't come on Saturday morning, feel free to clean up on your own schedule. Just let Patty know so we can record the volunteer hours. For more info call Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com

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E-mail any officer: was@wichitaaudubon.org

Send address changes to Sister Patricia Stanley, 6739 Perryton, Wichita, KS 67226
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2007 EXTENDED FIELD TRIP

The extended field trip for 2007 will be a three day excursion of southwest Colorado in June. We'll be looking for area specialties like Black Swift, Chukar, Flammulated Owl, Gray Vireo, Virginia's Warbler, and many others. Plan now on joining us June 11-13 in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. Pete Janzen will be planning the birding itinerary, and Patty Marlett will handle reservations. Call or E-mail Patty or sign up at the meetings to be a part of what is sure to be an excellent trip.

Leaders: Patty Marlett, 942-2164, pmarlett@mac.com
& Pete Janzen, 832-0182, pete.janzen@sbcglobal.net

FALL NATURE DAY, CONTINUED

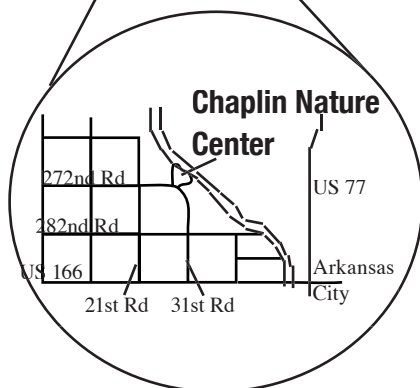
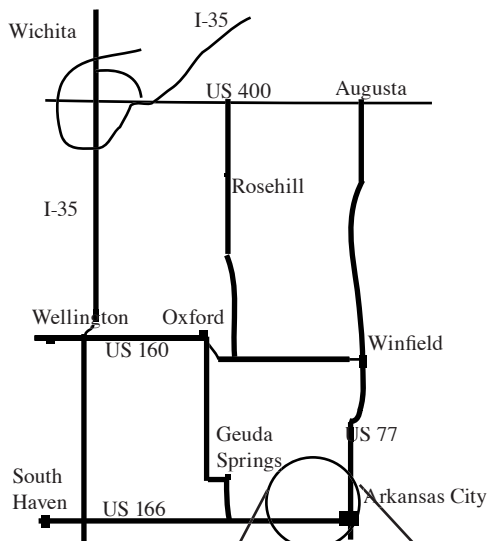
By attaching a tiny tag to their wing, we can help scientists track them and learn more about this unique phenomenon. In the past, two butterflies were recovered in Mexico that had been tagged at Chaplin Nature Center. They had traveled 1218 miles in 120 days.



As always there will be a country store featuring homemade baked goods, homegrown produce, and similar goodies. Lunch will be available to purchase, and will feature homemade

desserts. Or you are welcome to bring your own picnic lunch.

Fall Nature Day is free and open to the public. If you haven't been to Chaplin Nature Center, this is the time to get acquainted. Please come!



ARIZONA TRIP REPORT

Seventeen people traveled to Arizona for a fantastic marathon of birding, resulting in a list of 157 species

Sunday, July 30

Our Arizona adventure began with everyone arriving at the Portal Lodge on Sunday afternoon. Before dinner we went to the home of a nearby resident and watched hummingbirds from her patio. Several members of the group had already spent two days birding around Silver City, NM, so they had a head start on southwestern species.



Watching Hummers in Portal

Monday, July 31

Monday morning we awoke to rain. The plan was to drive along State Line Road to look for thrashers. We did see a Peregrine Falcon, along with a lot of flooded desert. Spadefoot and Great Plains toads were singing everywhere, and we found a big puddle full of mating toads. Eddie Stegall and Jim Marlett were delighted. After breakfast the rain continued, so we napped until about 10:30. It was still raining lightly, but we decided to ignore it. We went up Cave Creek Canyon and chased Elegant Trogans around for half an hour before finally getting good looks.

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ARIZONA, CONTINUED

We also found a pair of Arizona woodpeckers. After lunch in the picnic ground, we drove up the road to the Research Station. We watched hummingbirds at their feeders, with Broad-tailed, Rufous, Blue-throated, Magnificent, Black-



Who knew Arizona would be so wet?

chinned and Calliope all putting in appearances.

We drove Paradise Road to return to Portal, but almost couldn't make the low water crossings. The rain had raised the water level in the creek substantially. Later we heard that the road was supposed to be closed, and people were being urged not to drive it. We watched more hummers at the George Walker House in Paradise, with our best looks yet at Magnificent Hummingbird, and also got Juniper Titmouse. On the way back to Portal we stopped for a picture of the scenery and were rewarded with a cooperative Bendire's Thrasher, who sat on an agave stalk so everyone could see him.

After dinner we went owling. At Idlewild campground we played owl tapes. We got two Whiskered Screech Owls to talk to us, but never saw them. It started raining again, so we gave up and went back to our beds.

Tuesday, August 1

Before breakfast we went to the feeders of Dave Jasper in Portal. The biggest treat there was a rather ratty looking Crissal Thrasher. We then drove up to Rustler's Park. We had good luck with a number of species: Mexican Chickadee, Painted Redstart, Grace's Warbler, Greater Pewee and Olive Warbler. A Zone-tailed Hawk put in an appearance near the Chiricahua National Monument. We took a truly brutal washboard back road into Tombstone, then to Sierra Vista, where we stayed the next two nights.

Wednesday, August 2

The next morning we started early to head for Fort Huachuca, but the hassle of paperwork created some delays. We finally got our permits and headed out, led by Kerry Kirkpatrick, a former Kansan and WAS member who has moved to the Sierra Vista area. Right away we found a Botteri's Sparrow in a grassy field and everyone got good looks. Then we drove up Garden Canyon and found a noisy flock of Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers. At the end of the canyon we hiked up to find the Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Olive Warbler and Red-faced Warbler. Seven of us decided to hike up Scheelite Canyon while the rest of the group returned to town



Spotted Owls in Scheelite Canyon

for lunch. We only hiked about one-half mile when Carol spotted a pair of Spotted Owls sitting on a branch right over the trail. We got good looks and some decent pictures, too. Later in the afternoon we went to the Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve. We watched hummingbird feeders again - this time there were many Magnificent and Anna's. The real target was a Berylline that was being seen regularly. We were there maybe ten minutes when he appeared for about 15 seconds. We waited another forty minutes until he reappeared, again for a brief stay. He was a lifer for all of us. Then we went to the Beatty's Guest Ranch in Miller Canyon to watch their feeders. This time we added White-eared Hummingbird to our list.

Thursday, August 3

Thursday morning we started early at the Ballator B & B in Ash Canyon, where we were treated to Lucifer and Costa's Hummingbirds. Then we headed toward Patagonia where we stopped at the Paton's house to watch their feeders. This time we added Violet-crowned Hummingbird and Abert's Towhee.

Then it was on to the famous Patagonia rest stop, where Thick-billed Kingbirds nest and N. Beardless Tyrannulet can be found. We lunched at the Patagonia State Lake and took a very muddy hike looking for Black-capped Gnatcatcher, with no success. Then it was on to Kino Springs where the group saw a Gilded Flicker with Rick Taylor and the Borderland Tours group. They also found a Tropical Kingbird.

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ARIZONA, CONTINUED

The next morning the group split. Patty, Jim and Carol went to Mexico, while the rest remained in Arizona.

Friday, August 4

We started out the morning birding the grassland at the entrance to Madera Canyon. It didn't take long to see one of our target birds, the Varied Bunting. Getting the Rufous-winged Sparrow turned out to be more challenging. We had many Botteri's and Cassin's singing. Finally we had one near the road and got a scope on it. We went to pursue the Aztec Thrushes seen along one of the trails. We hiked 0.6 miles up a fairly steep trail to the spot where it had been seen and waited with several other birders. Finally, after over an hour, two thrushes showed up and delighted the crowd.

We celebrated with lunch in Green Valley, then went back into Madera Canyon. We spent some time looking for the tanager as well as a Black-capped Gnatcatcher that had been seen recently, but dipped on both. However, it was a very good day.

Saturday, August 5

On our last day of the tour we headed to California Gulch a little after 5 am. We had heard that the road into the gulch had deteriorated in the last couple of years, and from the recent heavy rains. High clearance vehicles were a necessity, and we all declared that road to be the worst we had ever been on. We got all the way in, but drove past the parking area and ended up on the property of a colorful character living there. He told us of the Five-striped Sparrows on his

property and invited us in. As we contemplated this, a Black-capped Gnatcatcher made an appearance. We decided to go to the usual spot and hiked down the hill where we found our sparrow. After the arduous journey back out, we visited Sycamore Canyon where a Rufous-capped Warbler has been hanging out. We were unable to find this skulker. With sunny skies, the temperature was heating up so we decided to head back to Green Valley. Some of us visited the local sewage lagoons and added a few shorebirds



Saguaro cactus

to the list. We celebrated with a nice supper, and afterward observed Lesser Nighthawk and called it a trip. Everyone managed to come away with at least one life bird. The species total for SE Arizona was 157.

Friday, August 4

We began our Mexico adventure with an hour and a half of paperwork at the border, then drove a winding road to Cananea - a rather harrowing drive because the road was narrow, had no shoulder, and everyone drove as fast as

humanly possible, included many enormous semi's. We survived and started down Sonora route 89. The road has numerous "vados" or low water crossings. There has been a great deal of rain in the southwest lately, with considerable flooding in some spots. The first few vados were wet, but OK. We came to one that was really muddy, but the locals waved us through, and it was no problem. But after about 30 miles we came to one that was a roaring river, completely impassable. We turned around to go back and had gone only about five miles when we were stopped by the police. A small concrete bridge was failing and they weren't allowing any traffic across it. So we were trapped between two impasses. It was about 3 p.m. by then. The police promised it would be fixed that night, but they didn't know when. So we had resigned ourselves to sleeping in the van when a bulldozer showed up. He plowed a bypass around the bridge and in a few minutes we were on our way. It took until 9 p.m. to get to our hotel in Hermosillo, but we were delighted to be there and had an excellent dinner to celebrate.

Saturday, August 5

Our troubles were behind us as we headed out across the desert toward Yecora. The rains may have cut us off from some prime birding areas, but it also made the desert blooming and lush. The flowers and butterflies were beautiful. We saw many desert species, including Verdin, Black-capped and Black-tailed Gnatcatchers, Rufous-winged Sparrows. As we got

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ARIZONA, CONTINUED

into the foothills of the Sierra Madre mountains we found a Sinaloa Wren. With the twisting, narrow road, it took all day to get to Yecora.

Sunday, August 6

Sunday morning was our only time for real birding. We walked up a logging road that had been recommended, but unfortunately it was a popular recreation site with many cars and bicycles. We did manage to see a pair of Short-tailed Hawks along with several common species. Next we went to a valley called the Barranca where we had our greatest success, with good looks at the Blue Mockingbird and Rufous-capped Warblers. An Orange-billed Nightingale Thrush sang loudly right under our noses,

but we only caught glimpses as it flitted through dense shrubs. A female Berylline hummingbird perched on a twig a few feet in front of us for a couple of minutes, then darted away to feed on the beautiful



red salvias blooming all around. Too soon we had to head back toward Hermosilla. On the way we added Lesser Roadrunner and Elegant Quail to our list. Varied Buntings were everywhere, and we saw and heard numerous Elegant Trogons. We made it to Hermosillo by sunset.

Monday, August 7

We headed for the USA. After returning the rental van, we had time to run back to Madera Canyon to try for the Aztec Thrushes. At the canyon, helpful people pointed the way, and we only had to wait about five minutes until the male and female showed up. They fed on berries, preened and just sat for about twenty minutes, then flew up the slope. It was a perfect end to a great trip.

The birders were Doris Burnett, Carol Cumberland, Duane & Maxine DeLong, Kevin & Laura Groeneweg, Julia Hoppes, Dan Kilby, Jim & Patty Marlett, Jim Mayhew, Cliff & Nadine Miller, Dale Randall, Eddie & Savilla Stegall, and Sandra Tholen.