



The Chat

Volume 53 Number 3 Columbia Audubon Society November 2010

<http://columbia-audubon.missouri.org/>

Serving Audrain, Boone, Cooper, Howard, Monroe and Randolph Counties

NOVEMBER MEETING: A MINI BIRDING FAIR: THE WELL-EQUIPPED BIRDER: ESSENTIALS, EXTRAS & FLUFF

- Wednesday, November 17 <at> 7:30
- Unitarian Univ. Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd.

Do you sometimes wonder if it is your eyes or your binoculars at fault when you can't "get on" that bird everyone else is oohing and ahing over? Have you thought about getting a spotting scope, but don't know if the investment is worth it? Have you outgrown your beginning field guide, but haven't had a chance to compare other guides? Are you curious about all the options for bird sound gadgets? Do you know what is in the prepared birder's car at all times?

The November 17th CAS program is a "Birding Fair" format at which you will have an opportunity for some hands-on experience with equipment and gear, and will be able to ask questions of experienced birders.

Put **7:30, November 17** on your calendar. This "mini Birding Fair" is scheduled so you will know exactly what to put on your Christmas wish list.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PRESCRIBED BURNS AT WILD HAVEN

John Besser, Nature Areas Chair

The Wild Haven nature area contains several habitats that are adapted to periodic fire, including woodlands, glades, and native and restored grasslands. After several years without fires, CAS is planning to conduct one or

more prescribed burns this fall or early winter. Roxie Campbell, naturalist at Rock Bridge State Park, and I have been planning burn units that will include both grasslands and adjacent open woodlands.

We hope volunteers -- with and without experience with prescribed burns -- will help make this project a success. You can help on one or both work days:

1. Clearing Fire Lanes. We will hold a **work day Saturday November 13** to clear fire lanes around one or more burn units. Meet us at noon at the Wild Haven picnic shelter. Volunteers will remove flammable materials from the fire lanes, using tools such as hand saws, loppers, and rakes. Bring a leaf blower if you have one!

2. Conducting Prescribed Burns. Once the fire lanes are prepared, we will wait for good weather to burn. We can't select exact dates, but some **possible work days include Nov. 26, 27, 28, and Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12**. If necessary, we may burn between Christmas and New Year. If you're interested in helping on the burn day, send me an e-mail with a phone number and I'll contact you when we pick a date.

Contact me at [jbesser1<at>gmail.com](mailto:jbesser1@gmail.com) or 573-874-5675 if you have questions or need directions.



COLUMBIA AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS – November

Field trips are to find, enjoy and learn about wild birds. These free trips are appropriate for adults and children 9 years old and above who have shown an interest in birds. Children aged 9 through 11 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

November 6, Saturday

SONGBIRD STATION WAREHOUSE SALE IN MEXICO & BIRDING MEXICO LAKES

Leader: Edge Wade 445-6697

Meet: 8:00 a.m. at Patricia's Supermarket parking lot on I-70 Drive Southeast and Keene St.

We will first check out all the bargains at the warehouse, then bird a site, go to a local restaurant for lunch, then bird another Mexico lake before our return to Columbia by 3:00 p.m.

November 13, Saturday 7:45-3:30--HABITAT POTPOURRI

LITTLE DIXIE LAKE CA, BRADFORD FARM, EAGLE BLUFFS CA, Callaway & Boone Co.

This is a joint field trip with St. Louis Audubon Society. We will meet them at Little Dixie Lake, bird there, then caravan to Bradford Farm. We will have lunch at a cafe (place to be determined), then go to Eagle Bluffs for the 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. period of wildlife viewing access.

R.S.V.P. email or phone by Tuesday, November 9.

Leader: Edge Wade 445-6697, [edgew<at>mchsi.com](mailto:edgew@at@mchsi.com)

Meet at the 63/AC commuter lot (southeast corner of US 63 and AC/New Haven Rd.) **We will leave the lot at 7:45 a.m.** to meet SLAS group at 8:00 a.m. at Little Dixie main lot on Rt. RA.

November 16, Tuesday morning--ESPECIALLY FOR BEGINNERS!

ROCK BRIDGE MEM. STATE PARK, Boone Co.

Leader: Edge Wade 445-6697

Meet: 8:30 at the Devil's Ice Box parking lot on Hwy. 163 in the park.

We will look for Winter Wren and other wintering species as we walk the parking lot and trails. Dress for cold. We'll go for some hot coffee/tea about 10:00.

November 20, Saturday morning

WHETSTONE CREEK CA, Callaway Co.

Leader: Edge Wade 445-6697

Meet: 8:30 at Patricia's Supermarket parking lot on I-70 Drive SE and Keene St.

Bring water, layered clothing.

Lunch will be at Marlene's in Williamsburg before our return to Columbia by 2:00.



COLUMBIA AUDUBON SUPPORTS THE EXTENSION OF THE CITY PARK SALES TAX: VOTE YES ON PROPOSITION 1 ON NOVEMBER 2

Mike Hood, the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Columbia and Mayor Bob McDavid presented our October program, outlining the need for continuing the 1/8 of one cent tax that was last renewed in 2005.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT & CHILI SUPPER: DEC 18

Susan Hazelwood and Jim Gast

Instead of a regular December meeting, chapter members are strongly encouraged to participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, December 18, 2010.

We will hold an organizational meeting at Laura Hillman's home, 7900 Cave Creek Rd, 7:30pm, Thurs, Dec 2. Section leaders, all interested in becoming section leaders and all wanting to learn more about the count should attend. Everyone is welcome!

Besides section leaders, we need counters, recorders, spotters, and drivers for the count. You do not have to be a birder to participate. We also need stay-at-home folks who count birds at their feeders. [See sidebar.]

If you'd like to participate, call Laura Hillman at 442-9733 and leave a message. If you have participated before and know which team you want to join, let Laura or your section leader know. Otherwise, Laura will assign you to a section in need of additional observers and counters.

The Columbia CBC covers a 7.5 mile radius centered on Rock Bridge Elementary School. We split into approximately 13 teams. Each team is assigned an area within the circle and each team will bird their area for most of the day.

We will conclude the day with the annual compiling session and chili dinner. They will take place at 6:00 pm on Saturday December 19 at Community of Christ Church located at 1111 Fairview Road in Columbia (formerly called the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints). It is south of Fairview Elementary School. The room will be open at 5:00 pm for food set-up. We usually have venison and buffalo chili and meatless chili, too, for those who have a preference along with veggies and desserts. The cost of dinner has yet to be determined but it is based on the cost of beverages, paper products, ice, and room rental (probably \$6-8). If you have questions about the chili dinner or are willing to bring a dessert, vegetables, chips, or soda please phone Laura Hillman at 442-3703 and leave a message. She will return your call. The compiling session will be led by Allison Vaughn following the chili dinner. It is a chance for all to hear about what birds were most common and what species were missed. We'll also learn if there were any unexpected species found.

The CBC is about "Citizen Science" at work. It reflects volunteers (citizen scientists) collecting data for scientific use. Our data from years past was prominent in the US Fish and Wildlife Service's first ever *State of the Birds Report* to Congress, and 40 years of CBC data was the backbone of Audubon's 2009 *Birds and Climate Change* report.

FEEDER COUNTERS, TOO!

Wanted: Individuals living in the count area to be "feeder counters" for the CBC on Saturday December 18, 2010. Counters should only record the maximum number of individuals of a given species seen at any one time at their feeders, and should be sure they are not counting the same birds more than once. For example, if you see two Blue Jays and later see three Blue Jays, the total number of Blue Jays seen for the count would be three, not five, because you could not be sure the first two were not part of the second group of three. Another example is seeing four female cardinals at once and later seeing two male cardinals at the same time. You could then say you had seen six cardinals since male and female cardinals can be distinguished visually.

Observe for as much of or as little of the day as you wish (although we do ask for a minimum of 15 minutes of observation). Just be sure to keep track of the time spent observing. Report the species, number of individuals of each species, and time spent observing to Bonnie Heidi at (573) 442-2191 (home) or (573) 356-3213 (mobile) between 3:00 and 5:00 PM the day of the count. If interested contact Laura Hillman at (573) 442-3703.

RECENT CAS BOARD ACTIVITY

Howard Hinkel, CAS President

Late Board meetings followed by full programs in September and October have precluded my informing you sufficiently about what actions the Board has taken. In the following I'm hoping to play catch-up. I won't go into details but will invite comments and questions about any of these items at an upcoming meeting.

1. The Board happily accepted Bill Mees' offer to build a sign to be placed near the entrance to Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary. It is nearly completed and the Nature Areas committee, Bill, and I will meet soon to decide upon exact placement. Bill donated the sign and his talents; others will donate heft and bulk to posthole digging and the raising of the sign.
2. The Board equally happily accepted Tim James' (MDC) offer to spray a large area of fescue in the Sanctuary; he has done so and the results are now quite obvious. The plan is not to plant in the Spring but to give a growth season to the native weeds to see what comes up, and then to plant a year from now if necessary. This is an attempt to provide better habitat and seeds for the wildlife in the vicinity.
3. We encouraged Edge Wade to explore the possibility of having bird species observed on CAS properties entered, in CACHE-like fashion, onto the ASM website. Edge will keep us informed of the likelihood of this coming about.
4. The Nature Areas committee has reported that the Wild Haven residence has a roof, moisture, and mold problem that needs attention. John Besser and Bill Mees have gotten four cost estimates for addressing the problem. The Board will receive more information about the house before making a recommendation to bring to the greater membership for a vote.
5. Doug Miller has been working on the CAS website; I encourage you to visit it. The Board has voted that further development should

include a link where Audubon members could post bird photos.

6. Allison Vaughn volunteered to work with Hillary Carter, an AmeriCorps member serving with Columbia Parks and Recreation as part of the Missouri Clean Water AmeriCorps Program. Hillary has sought CAS help in the efforts to restore the wetland and bottomland woods areas at the former site of Sewer Treatment Plant #2; a 3M grant funds this effort. Ultimately a trail will be installed through the nature area, and educational signs will be placed along the trail giving information on wetlands, native plants and wildlife, and migratory birds.

7. The Board agreed to fund the CAS Feeder Watch Program, overseen by Lisa Schenker, for this school year. Eleven classrooms are participating. We also agreed to send Lottie Bushmann, a primary teacher at Benton Elementary to the Audubon Field Ornithology Camp at Hog Island, Maine during summer 2011.

8. With helpful materials supplied by Dolores Clark, David Schenker and I attended the recent Columbia Civic Orchestra concert entitled "A Pastoral Evening." We were able to get informational Audubon materials into the hands of quite a few people before the concert began and during intermission. No evidence is in yet, but we believe we may gain several new members, which made us smile. Our biggest smiles, however, spread during the second movement of Beethoven's Sixth ("Pastoral") symphony when we heard calls of a nightingale, quail, and cuckoo, thanks to the flute, the oboe, and the clarinet.

9. Bottom Line: At the October meeting Treasurer Eric Seaman reported a balance of \$11,113.60.

* indicates a voting member

*President : Howard Hinkel

E-mail List: Jim Gast

*Vice-President: Alice Reese

Outreach & Education Lisa Schenker

*Secretary: Bonnie Heidy

Conservation: *Dave Bedan

*Treasurer: Eric Seaman

Field Trips: *Edge Wade

Directors: *Jean Graebner

Natural Areas: *John Besser (Wild Haven)

*Laura Hillman

Harold Anderson (Albert Area)

*Bill Mees

Cleo Kottwitz (CANS)

Membership: *Eric Seaman (see above)

Hospitality: Dolores Clark
474-4510

Communication: *Allison Vaughn

Bird Counts: Laura Hillman (see above)
Allison Vaughn (see above)

Chat Editor: David Schenker

Past President: *Vanessa Melton

Website: Douglas Miller

October--what a time to enjoy the birds. We all no doubt have observed the phenomenon described below. The lines are from Mary Oliver's "Starlings in Winter." The oft-dismissed Starling here inspires awe.

Chunky and noisy,
but with stars in their black
feathers,
they spring from the telephone
wire and instantly

they are acrobats
in the freezing wind.
And now, in the theater of air,
they swing over buildings,

dipping and rising;
they float like one stippled star
that opens,

becomes for a moment
fragmented,

then closes again;
and you watch
and you try
but you simply can 't imagine

how they do it
with no articulated instruction,
no pause,
only the silent confirmation
that they are this notable thing,

this wheel of many parts, that
can rise and spin
over and over again,
full of gorgeous life.

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1331, Columbia, MO 65205. Check a category: Student (\$10.00) Individual (\$15.00) Family (\$25.00) Donor (\$50.00) Friend/Business sponsor (\$300.00)

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