

The Chat

Volume 54 Number 7

Columbia Audubon Society

April 2012

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

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

The mission of Columbia Audubon Society is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS



Now that my two-year term as president is coming to a close I wish to thank the current Board and CAS membership for all the work they have done for the Chapter. The two years

presented us with some difficult issues. Although we could not resolve those issues to everyone's satisfaction, I think the Chapter is generally in fine shape. So let's look ahead.

At the April 18 meeting we will vote on the slate of candidates Laura Hillman and her committee have announced in this issue of "The Chat." Please remember that our Bylaws provide the opportunity for nominations to come from the floor at the meeting, but with the stipulation that the person being nominated in this way be present at the meeting to confirm her or his willingness to serve on the Board. 20 members constitute a quorum, which is needed for election of officers.

Bird on, and thanks again.

Howard Hinkel

APRIL MEETING

Wednesday, April 18, 2012 7:00 p.m.
Unitarian Universalist Church
2615 Shepard Boulevard, Columbia

"CONSERVATION, BIRD OBSERVATIONS, AND FUN WITH CACHE/SPARKS"

Many Columbia Audubon Society members contribute to the CACHE/SPARKS* program of the Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) by visiting conservation areas and state parks and entering their finds into the database. Edge Wade will explain how our participation helps fund conservation projects in Missouri, expands our knowledge of Missouri birds for good management decisions, and provides great opportunities and purpose for what we enjoy--birding.

Edge will be wearing her ASM Conservation Partnership Coordinator hat. In this volunteer position, she works with Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) to design, oversee and promote the CACHE/SPARKS program. Her knowledge of Missouri (she's birded in all 114 counties), of Missouri birders, and her passion for birds and habitat preservation converge in her coordinator role.

* CACHE : Conservation Area Checklist

* SPARKS : State Parks Checklist

Hosts : Joyce Hullett and Martha Donnell

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REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

by Laura Hillman, Chair

The Nominating Committee (Laura Hillman, Kathleen Anderson, and Caroline Terry), with help from others, is pleased to present the following slate of officers for 2012-2013:



Past President: Howard Hinkel
President: Bill Mees
Vice President: Julie Fisher
Secretary: Alice Robinson
Treasurer: Eric Seaman
Board Member: Laura Hillman (Term still active)
Board Member: Bonnie Heidy (Term still active)
Board Member: Lori Hagglund (New three year term)

Elections will be conducted at the April general meeting. A quorum of 20 members must be present to validate the election.

MIGRATORY BIRD COUNT MAY 12... (second Saturday in May as always)

by Laura Hillman

While it is true that we have no place to send our Boone county data yet, we will collect it as we always have since the early 90's so that we will have an unbroken series of good data.

Hopefully, the same teams as last year (and many years before) will be out in the field.

If you have not done the count before or have not been contacted to participate by the beginning of May, call me at 442-3703 or e-mail at hillmanl@missouri.edu. Following the day's birding, I will hold a gathering at my house to swap stories of the day and turn in lists (which we will keep on our "more than adequate" computer until the lists go to their final home). More to follow, but save the date in case you haven't.



NOTE FROM LISA SCHENKER, 4TH GRADE TEACHER, GRANT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Many thanks to the following CAS birders who greeted, instructed, and shared scopes with 44 fourth graders from Grant Elementary at Eagle Bluffs on May 21: Edge Wade, Sandy Elbert, Janice Gaston, Bonnie Heidy, Howard Hinkel, Eric Wood, and Julie Fisher. It was a spectacular outing, and as you can tell from the notes below, the young birders from Grant were most enthusiastic and appreciative!

- "Thank you for coming along to Eagle Bluffs to help us learn. The scopes were wonderful! I can't believe how many birds we saw. So many coots! I so appreciate it!" *Sophie Bones*
- "Thank you for birding with us. My favorite bird was the white pelican. It was awesome to see it. Can't wait to see you again!" *Isaiah Wilson*
- "Thank you for coming to Eagle Bluffs with us! My favorite bird was the American Avocet. It was so cute and vibrant! Thank you for sharing your scopes with us." *Nathan Schneider*
- "Thank you for sharing the spotting scopes. We loved going to Eagle Bluffs. I loved seeing the ruddy ducks and tree swallow. It was so kind of you to spend time with us." *Will Tatum*

TIPS FOR TYROS

by Edge Wade



April is here. It is time (if you haven't already begun) to prepare for birders' equivalent of basketball's March Madness: Spring Migration!

Spring Migration is a catch-all name for the extended period of the movement of birds northward in North America. It really begins in late winter with waterfowl--the ducks and geese (and swans)--heading back toward the Arctic tundra and the prairie potholes to feed and breed. Shorebirds follow in quick succession, with pelicans, herons, cormorants, and other birds associated with water, coming in their wake.

Then come the passerines! Flycatchers (Eastern Phoebe are here already), thrushes, vireos, tanagers, orioles, and warblers will begin to appear in Missouri, some to stay, some to feed and rest and move on.

Get ready for them. The more prepared you are, the more you will see and the more you will enjoy them.

Here is a program for Preparation M (as in Migration):

*Review the American Birding Association (ABA) Principles of Birding Ethics. Find this at www.aba.org On the home page, point to "About ABA" then click on "Code of Ethics" when it appears below.

*Review the text sections of Enjoying Missouri's Birds, the 42-page Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) publication, and renew your mind with the many aspects of birds and birding that make bird watching so intriguing and fun.

*Look at the bar graphs that depict the dates of presence of birds in Missouri. Starting on page 22, look to see what birds appear when. You'll note, for example that you will have all summer to enjoy Blue-gray Gnatcatchers that begin to appear in mid April, but only about a month to see both kinglets (and not exactly the same timeframe).

Take special care to review the graphs for the warbler species. You'll quickly see that they do not all appear at the same time, and that some stay and others will be gone in a week or two.

*Begin to study those field marks! A sensible approach is to combine the information in the bar graphs with your favorite field guide. For example, note that Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Orange-crowned and Nashville Warblers are among the first to arrive. Study them first. Learn their field marks, behavior/habitat preferences, and, if possible, listen to and learn their vocalizations.

It is important not to "overload." That is, study just one small group at a time. Get to know them as well as you can. If you come upon a bird you haven't studied, your brain will instantly rule out the ones you know, and you have a place to begin to determine what it is.

Repeat the process of studying a small group, perhaps adding a new group each week.

*Go birding. Spend as much time as you can in the field during spring migration. Go alone to hone your skills; go with others to learn new techniques and bird lore.

Missouri Department of Conservation Natural Events Calendar 2012 notes, in the month of April,

- Northern Bobwhites begin calling
- Chimney Swifts return
- Indigo Buntings and Dicksissels are arriving
- House Wrens begin to arrive
- Warbler migration peaks

EARTHCARE IN A GUATEMALA RAINFOREST

by Cleo Kottwitz

Rob Cahill, Co-director of Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC) in the central highlands of Guatemala, will be speaking at Missouri United Methodist Church, 204 S. 9th St., Tuesday evening, April 24, 7:00 pm. Columbia Audubon Society is co-sponsoring his presentation, and Audubon members are urged to attend and to extend the invitation to their network of friends and colleagues.



CCFC works to alleviate poverty and protect forests through agroecology, reforestation, environmental education, and eco-tourism in forty, rural Q'eqchi' Maya communities that border the cloud forests. They partner

with Heifer International, US Fish and Wildlife, and Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Cahill and his wife, Tara, and their four children have lived and worked in Guatemala's central highlands for 12 years; they take a holistic approach to stabilizing and restoring communities and an ecosystem in peril. Cahill's presentation is a visually rich introduction to the cloud forest and its wildlife, with special emphasis on the Resplendent Quetzal. Cahill is an avid birdwatcher and serves as coeditor/co-citation referee for eBird Guatemala, a program of National Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

For those unable to attend the Tuesday evening presentation, he will also be presenting Sunday afternoon, April 22, 2012, 2:00 pm, at Calvary Episcopal Church, 123 S. Ninth.

SEEKING BUSINESS SPONSORS

by Julie Fisher

The Columbia Audubon Society (CAS) does many wonderful things to fulfill its important mission—***“to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological Diversity.”***

CAS provides grants to fund environmental education projects or field trips for area students. We lead field trips and host events for area schools. A partial scholarship is available to teachers and youth leaders to attend National Audubon Society workshops.

In addition, CAS maintains three nature areas—Albert Children's Nature Area, Wild Haven Nature Area, and the newest, Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary—which are managed in accordance with the mission of the National Audubon Society, “...to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife.”

Fulfilling our mission requires an active membership. It also requires money. That is why the CAS Board of Directors is actively seeking business sponsors. At the annual \$300 level, business sponsorships provide much needed monies. In return, these “Friends of Columbia Audubon” receive a plaque, endorsement of their business, and recognition in The Chat and on the CAS website: <http://Columbia-Audubon.org/>

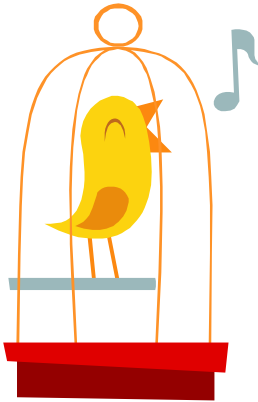
Please look for the growing list of business sponsors and support them with your business and a “thank you”. If you have suggestions for potential business sponsors, please contact Julie Fisher (julie8401@tranquility.net)

For your reading enjoyment:

CHAT EXCLUSIVE: INTERVIEW WITH BIG BIRD

by Eric Seaman

Mr. Bird arrived at the interview dressed in resplendent yellow plumage and orange tarsus. His other distinguishing features included a pink eye crescent and small patches of yellow crest feathers. He was headlining the musical “Elmo Makes Music” at the Fort Smith Convention Center.



Chat: “Thanks for taking the time to speak with us given your busy schedule of touring and taping shows.”

BB: “It’s no problem. I appreciate the fans back in central Missouri. Could you say ‘hi’ to the sandhill cranes at Eagle Bluffs for me?”

Chat: “Sure. You seem very aware of where other birds are. How do you keep track?”

BB: “There have been a lot of bad jokes regarding my ‘tweets’, so I stay away from things like twitter. However state Rare Bird Alerts are a kind of social media for birds-on-the-go. It’s a great way to keep track of old friends. Most sightings are reported by knowledgeable observers who care about birds and bird issues. Reading about the cranes on Mobirds let me know some old friends were healthy– and that their family was expanding. Congrats, guys!”

Chat: “... wow never realized... um, our readers are familiar with strains on less famous birds – mainly habitat loss. What big issues threaten the more famous birds?”

BB: “First of all, a bird living on a street made of sesame seeds is bound to get heartburn (chuckles). Seriously though, everyone is always vying for my time. Despite our success, there are times when funding to my employer, Public Broadcasting System is threatened. I’m telling you, it’s hard out there for a peep.”

Chat: “You the bird! Can I quote you on that?”

BB: “Sorry man, it’s copyrighted by the Children’s Television Workshop. You REALLY don’t want to mess with them. In fact, this interview is over –gotta fly. (not really).”

Next month: The Chat interviews the Honey Badger.

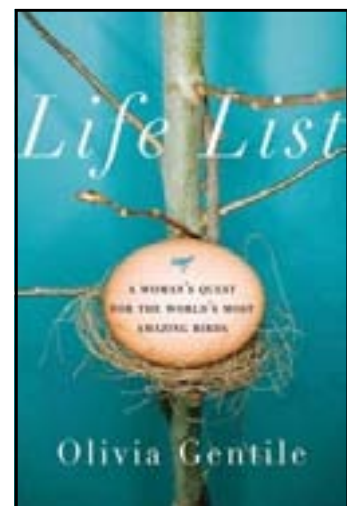
BOOK REVIEW

by Alice Robinson

Life List – A Woman’s Quest for the World’s Most Amazing Birds

Author: Olivia Gentile

Get a jump on your summer reading with Life List – A Woman’s Quest for the World’s Most Amazing Birds by Olivia Gentile (available from the library.) It tells the saga of Phoebe Snetsinger of Webster Groves and her quest to be the first person to see eight thousand birds. You’ll “visit” many countries and “see” numerous exotic birds as the author chronicles Phoebe’s journeys using her journals, poems, and interviews with family members. Quoting from the dust jacket, “Gentile approaches her subject with equal parts sympathy and sobriety, capturing both the exhilaration and the costs of pursuing one’s passion to the fullest.” The spouses of birders will especially appreciate their own partners after reading “Life List.”



Editor's note:

For other books on birds, check out the website
“The Birder’s Library”
<http://www.birderslibrary.com/>

FIELD TRIPS, APRIL AND MAY, 2012

by Edge Wade



Date: SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2012

Location: D.C. Rogers and Peters Lake, west of Fayette

Leader: Edge Wade

Departure point: Parking lot south of McDonald's on Stadium

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Details: We'll go to D.C. Rogers and Peters Lakes, then stop by Possum Haw on the Fayette square to peruse the natural history books over a cup of coffee.

Participants may return to Columbia or have lunch in Fayette. R.S.V.P. by April 5, so we know how many will stay for lunch and can plan cars.

Contact Person: Edge Wade 445-6697 or edgew@mchsi.com

Date: TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2012

Location : Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary

Leaders: Bill Mees and Howard Hinkel

Details: Meet at the sanctuary at the Cunningham stub entrance off Bray at 8:00 a.m.

Contact Person: Bill Mees 445-7781

Date: SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2012

Trip co-sponsored with Songbird Station. Beginners especially welcome.

Location: Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary

Details: Meet at Songbird Station at 8:00 a.m. to caravan to the sanctuary, or meet us at the Cunningham stub entrance off Bray at 8:30 a.m. We will return to the store for donuts and coffee between 10:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Contact Person: Edge Wade 268-3714

Date: FRIDAY, APRIL 27 through SUNDAY, APRIL 29

Location: Joplin

Details: Audubon Society of Missouri Spring Meeting. See www.mobirds.org for details and registration form.

Date: SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2012

Location: Wild Haven Nature Sanctuary

Leader: John Besser

Departure point: Patricia's Supermarket parking lot

Departure Time: 7:30 a.m.

(Or meet the group at Wild Haven at 8:00 a.m.)

Take Route B north of US 63. After crossing RR tracks (about 1 mile), turn right on Brown Station Road. Stay on this road through stop sign, then take first right turn onto O'Rear Road. Follow O'Rear until it turns to gravel, then look for the Wild Haven sign and gate on the right (about a mile from Brown Station).

Contact Person: John Besser at jbesser1@gmail.com

Date: SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2012

Location: Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, Devil's Ice Box parking lot

Trip co-sponsored with Songbird Station. Beginners especially welcome.

Details: Meet at Songbird Station at 8:00 a.m. to caravan to the park. Devil's Ice Box parking lot is on the west side of Hwy. 163 just beyond (south of) the Gans Creek and Clear Creek bridges. We'll return to Songbird Station between 10:00 and 10:30 a.m. for coffee and donuts.

Contact Person: Edge Wade 268-3714

Date: MONDAY, MAY 14, 2012

Location: Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

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

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Contact Person: Edge Wade 268-3714

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*Vice-President Julie Fisher <i>julie8401@tranquility.net</i>	Communication *Allison Vaughn <i>allisonjv@yahoo.com</i>	Natural Areas *John Besser (Wild Haven) <i>jbesser1@gmail.com</i> Nicholas March (Albert Area) Bill Mees (Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary)
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	Outreach & Education Lottie Bushman & Lisa Schenker <i>lbushman@columbia.k12.mo.us</i>	Past President *Vanessa Melton <i>vanndawn@hotmail.com</i>

Did you know: the Egyptian vulture, a white bird about the size of a raven, throws stones with its beak to open ostrich eggs? This bird is one of the very few animals that, like man, manipulates objects as tools.....from The Book of Useless Information

Membership dues and donations are used to fulfill Columbia Audubon Society's mission. Encourage friends to become members of Columbia Audubon Society!

COLUMBIA AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Dues support Columbia Audubon Society functions such as the nine issues of our newsletter (The Chat *), the Christmas Bird Count, educational initiatives with schools, and property maintenance. The membership is for 12 months. Make checks payable to the Columbia Audubon Society. Mail the check with this form to:
Columbia Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1331, Columbia, MO 65205.

Check membership category: ___ Student (\$10.00) ___ Individual (\$15.00) ___ Family (\$25.00) ___ Donor (\$50.00)
___ Friend/Business sponsor (\$300.00) ___ Accept my donation of \$_____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

*Email address: The Chat is only delivered via email _____

WILD HAVEN NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

by John Besser

[jbesser1@gmail.com]

On Saturday February 25, a crew of volunteers conducted a prescribed burn of about ten acres of woodland at the CAS Wild Haven Nature Area. After almost two winters of planning and waiting, the weather was right, the fire lines were cleared, and a team was assembled and armed with torches, water packs, rakes, and a leaf blower. The burn unit was bounded by Hinkson Creek on the south, a small tributary creek on the west, O'Rear Road on the north, and the open shelter area on the east. At 1 PM, after a small test burn, we started a back fire near the shelter and two teams slowly worked their ways in opposite directions around the unit. Once we reached the west side, the light wind moved the fire quickly through dry ground layer of the open woodlands. Over 90% of the area burned, including several brush piles and some steep slopes along Hinkson and the tributary (see photos).

Roxie Campbell, a Wild Haven neighbor and Rock Bridge naturalist, was our fire boss. She was ably assisted by members of the MU Tiger Fire Team: Daniel Goodwin, Garrett Arnold, and Benjamin Zack. Other volunteers included Jabez Campbell, Julian Ramsey, Eric Seaman and Kevin Feltz. Many thanks to all!

We predict that this burn will stimulate quite a show of wild flowers this spring. There will be a couple of opportunities to enjoy the beauty of Wild Haven:

Work Day, Saturday April 14 (9:00 a.m.-noon). Meet at the Wild Haven workshop. We'll be removing a fence and debris from the former tenants' garden. Wear boots and work gloves and bring shovels and wire cutters.

Field Trip, Saturday May 5 (8:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.). We'll look for warblers and wildflowers! We'll carpool from the north parking lot at Patricia's Grocery at 7:30 a.m., or you can meet us at the picnic shelter at 8:00 a.m.



Wild Haven burn - "former" brush pile



Wild Haven burn - glade



Upcoming events

- April 7: CAS Field Trip**
- April 10: CAS Field Trip**
- April 12: Café Songbird**
- April 14: Clean up Wild Haven**
- April 14: Songbird Station Field Trip**
- April 18: Regular Meeting**
- April 21: Clean up CANS/Bonnie View**
- April 22: Earthcare in Guatemala**
- April 24: Earthcare in Guatemala**
- April 27-29: ASM Spring Meeting**
- May 5: Wild Haven Field Trip**
- May 5: Songbird Stations Field Trip**
- May 12: Spring Migratory Bird Count**
- May 16: CAS Annual picnic @ Wild Haven**

Columbia Audubon Society wants to thank
our corporate sponsor

Songbird Station

Songbird Station invites everyone to “Café Songbird”
on Thursday, April 12 at 10:30 a.m. to share bird
stories and photos and to hear what other backyard
birders are seeing in their yards.

Coffee and refreshments will be provided as fellow
birders swap stories. Songbird Station is located at
2010 Chapel Plaza Court, Suite C, Columbia MO
65203. Phone 573-446-5941 or on the web at
www.songbirdstation.com

Columbia Audubon Society
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