

# The Chat

Volume 55 Number 1

**Columbia Audubon Society**

August 2012

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

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

The mission of Columbia Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world and its ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and the earth's biological diversity, through education, environmental study, and habitat restoration and protection. *Adopted August 15, 2012*

## CAS 2012-2013 Officers

- Bill Mees, President & Manager,  
Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary
- Julie Fisher, Vice President
- Alice Robinson, Secretary
- Eric Seaman, Treasurer
- Lori Hagglund, Director
- Bonnie Heidy, Director
- Laura Hillman, Director & Bird Counts
- John Besser, Manager, Wild Haven  
Nature Area
- Lottie Bushmann, Outreach & Education
- Dolores Clark, Hospitality
- Jim Gast, e-Mail Coordinator
- Howard Hinkel, Past President
- Jan Mees, Chat Editor
- Doug Miller, Membership & Webmaster
- Lisa Schenker, Outreach & Education
- Allison Vaughn, Communications & Bird  
Counts

## First Meeting

Wednesday, September 19, 2012  
7:00 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Church  
2615 Shepard Blvd.

Speaker: Mike Syldowski,  
Science Coordinator,  
Columbia Public Schools  
Hostess: Dolores Clark

**See page 2 for further details!!**

## BOARD'S EYE VIEW

For many of you, this column is the first introduction to your new CAS president. As a recent devotee of birding not just in, but beyond the backyard, I wonder what the future holds for CAS?

This year the Board, with the support of the membership, will direct its efforts toward several goals: 1) increase membership; 2) further the CAS mission thru education; and 3) increase the public's awareness of CAS.

Julie Fisher, your Vice President, is scheduling programs throughout the year that will highlight "education" as a theme. I believe you will be impressed with the lineup of speakers she has for you.

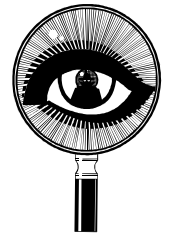
Are you aware there is such a thing as "Partner Friend" with Columbia Public Schools (CPS)? Columbia Audubon Society supports several education opportunities in the Columbia community. The "Partner Friend" designation is an opportunity to formalize this relationship. Please see article on Page 3 for more on Partner Friend.

Finally, we all have friends who are "backyard birders." Isn't that how most of us got here as CAS members? We need more members to continue the work of fulfilling the CAS mission. If you have a friend who enjoys birds, why not give them the gift of a CAS membership? This has to be the bargain of the century, \$15. It doesn't have to be watered, hung on a wall, or dusted, and no one else is going to think of it. Your gift of a membership may lead to a new long time member.

I would also like to give a nod of appreciation to our past president Howard Hinkel for all his hard work. He stepped in as our leader when others declined because the challenges facing CAS were so daunting. He brought us through the difficulties and the future looks brighter now than ever. Thank you, Howard.

That's all for now. If you have thoughts please let me know. As President of Columbia Audubon Society I want to represent the membership and our future.

Thanks for listening,  
Bill Mees



## 2012-2013 PROGRAM UPDATE

Missouri has no shortage of knowledgeable and capable people willing to share their area of expertise with Columbia Audubon Society. That makes my job of lining up programs easy and certainly makes belonging to Columbia Audubon Society exciting.

Good programs encourage involvement of current members and entice prospective members. While CAS is understandably "bird" focused, our CAS mission features two other prominent words: "conservation" and "education." Last year's programs reflected conservation themes, with presentations by folk from Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, Audubon Society of Missouri, to name a few.

This year's programs promise to be equally interesting, reflecting an education theme. To start, we will enjoy a presentation by Mike Szydlowski, Science Coordinator for Columbia Public Schools. CAS has partnered with CPS to bring the first "Band With Nature" second grade field trip, hosted at Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary on September 20 (rain date September 25.)

Additional guest speakers confirmed are nature photographer, Noppadol Paothong, Dana Ripper and Ethan Duke, director and assistant director of Missouri River Bird Observatory, and Dr. Patricia Hagen, Executive Director at Riverlands Audubon Center.

Watch your Chat newsletters and our CAS website for more information about these and other upcoming programs.

Please note MEETING TIMES. The Board will meet from 6:00 to 7:00. Our monthly programs will begin at 7:00 and will be followed by our business meeting and refreshments. All programs are held at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Boulevard, Columbia.

Julie Fisher, Vice President

## 2012-2013 PROGRAMS

Mark your calendars, bring a friend or two, and plan to join us at Unitarian-Universalist Church. Programs begin at 7:00 P.M.

- Sept 19: Mike Szydlowski, K-12 Science Coordinator for Columbia Public Schools, will present "Next Generation Science in Columbia Public Schools." A discussion about joint CAS/CPS projects will follow.
- Oct. 17: Nature photographer, Noppadol Paothong, will present his work on the making of his important new book, *Save the Last Dance; A Story of North American Grassland Grouse.*
- Nov. ????: Lottie Bushmann and Becky Elder, Columbia Public Schools teachers, will share their experiences at Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine and how they plan to take their training to their elementary students.
- Dec. 19: Chili Supper and Christmas Bird Count
- Jan. 16: Dana Ripper and Ethan Duke, Director and Assistant Director of Missouri River Bird Observatory will discuss their research and monitoring projects and education and outreach efforts.
- Feb. 20: Dr. Patricia Hagen, Executive Director of Audubon Center at Riverlands, whose exciting work includes a citizen science landbird monitoring program and several educational and community outreach programs.
- Mar. 20: John Cunning, Director of Resource Management and Interpretation Program for Department of Natural Resources, will talk about the values of interpretation and nature education through various media.
- Apr. 17: TBA
- May 15: Picnic



**Hospitality volunteers needed! Please consider signing up to provide refreshments for the monthly meetings. A sign up sheet will be available at the September meeting. Thank you to Dolores Clark for providing refreshments for our first meeting!!!**

## PARTNER FRIENDS: COLUMBIA AUDUBON SOCIETY AND COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



### A Mission, Education, and “Partner Friend”



Education is one of the important components of Columbia Audubon Society’s (CAS) new mission statement: to preserve the natural world and its ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and the earth’s biological diversity, through education, environmental study, and habitat restoration and protection.”

CAS has quite a track record regarding its education activities: 1) CAS funds a field trip to Rockbridge State Park for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from Grant Elementary School with CAS members volunteering as guides; 2) CAS provides the tuition for a classroom teacher to attend the National Audubon Society Camp on Hog Island in Maine; 3) through its “Outreach and Education” committee, CAS encourages classroom participation in Project Feeder Watch; 4) This year, CAS will partner with Columbia Public Schools (CPS), Missouri Department of Conservation, and Songbird Station, for a field trip to Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary for second graders.

The CAS Board wants to formalize its support of nature education. The Board recommends establishing what CPS calls a “Partner Friend” relationship with the school district’s Science Department. The “Partner Friend” designation acknowledges a working relationship between CAS and CPS that will augment the accomplishments of each. CAS will continue to support its current education activities but new opportunities will arise - opportunities that might have gone unrecognized without the Partner Friend relationship. This relationship also increases community awareness of Columbia Audubon Society’s support of nature education and its new partnership with CPS.

By Bill Mees

## FREE TO FIRST ELIGIBLE RESPONDER

One free registration to the Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) annual Fall Meeting, the weekend of September 21, 22, 23 at Camp Clover Point, Lake of the Ozarks State Park.

This offer is available ONLY to a CAS member who has never been to an ASM meeting before. ASM Fall Meetings include field trips; opportunities to meet and visit with other birders from all around Missouri; hear what’s happening around the state, birdwise; learn better birding techniques at workshops; and enjoy really good food (among the experienced attendees, diets are usually suspended for these days).

Details of the the weekend activities are on the ASM webpage, [www.mobirds.org](http://www.mobirds.org) under the banner head “ASM” and in the dropdown menu item “meetings”.

The first, eligible responder gets this deal worth \$65.00. Email Edge Wade: [edgew@mchsi.com](mailto:edgew@mchsi.com)

## FIELD TRIPS 2012-2013

### September 8, 2012—Saturday

Leaders: Howard Hinkel/Bill Mees 445-7781  
Destination: Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary  
Meet at Songbird Station at 8:00 A.M. or at CANS at 8:30 A.M.

### Sept. 29, 2012—Saturday

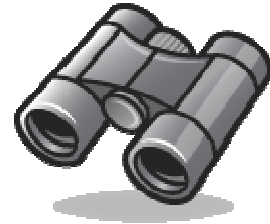
Leader: Bill Mees 445-7781  
Destination: MKT Trail---3M Reclamation site  
Meet at Songbird Station at 8:00 A.M.

### Oct. 27, 2012—Saturday

Leader: John Besser 874-5675  
Destination: Twin Lakes and Hinkson Creek CA  
Songbird Station Anniversary field trip. Meet at 8:00 A.M.

### Oct. 27, 2012—Saturday

Leader: Edge Wade 268-3714  
Destination: Knob Noster State Park & Perry Memorial CA  
Departure at 6:30 A.M. sharp. Meeting place to be announced. This is a joint field trip with CAS hosted by Burroughs Audubon Society (Kansas City)



CAS field trips are free and open to anyone interested in birds. All trips are probably a “go” even in light rain. If in doubt, contact a trip leader the evening before or one hour before the scheduled meeting time.

These trips are appropriate for adults, teens and children who have demonstrated an active interest in birds. Few children under age nine will benefit from these walking trips. Children should be accompanied by an adult.

## FALL EVENTS

**September 13, 2012** (Thursday): Songbird Station will host its every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday “Songbird Café” Come and share your most recent birding experiences and sightings.

**September 16, 2012** (Sunday): “Beginning Birding” class at Songbird Station begins at 2:00 P.M. Edge Wade will be the class instructor.

**September 19, 2012** (Wednesday): CAS Monthly meeting, Unitarian Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd. **Speaker:** Mike Szydlowski, Science Coordinator, Columbia Public Schools

**September 20, 2012** (Thursday): “Band with Nature” 2<sup>nd</sup> grade field trip to Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary in partnership with Columbia Public Schools, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Songbird Station. *Rain date: Tuesday, Sept 25, 2012*

**September 21-23, 2012** ASM Fall Meeting, Camp Clover Point, Lake of the Ozarks State Park. See the [mobirds.org](http://mobirds.org) web site for more information

**October 17, 2012** (Wednesday): CAS Monthly meeting, 7:00 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd. **Speaker:** Nature photographer, Noppadol Paothong, will present his work on the making of his important new book, *Save the Last Dance: A Story of North American Grassland Grouse*.

**October 26, 2012** (Friday): Songbird Station, as part of its Anniversary celebration, is sponsoring an “Evening with Audubon” with wine and cheese and friends from 6:00 P.M.- 8:00 P.M.



## MEET THE 2012-2013 CAS OFFICERS

**Name:** Bill Mees, President  
**Family:** wife Jan, 2 sons Jeff and Greg, and 5 grandchildren...3 boys and 2 girls  
**Profession:** Retired after a 32 year career as a pharmaceutical sales representative with Eli Lilly & Co.



**Hobbies:** Wednesday CACHE trips, and woodworking  
**How long have you lived in Columbia?** Moved to Columbia in 1973

**How long have you been a member of CAS?** 4 years

**What do you like best about CAS?** The willingness of members to share their knowledge about birds and nature. Also the efforts CAS makes to share its properties with the Columbia community and to educate people about nature.

**How did you get interested in birding?** My parents always had bird feeders when I was growing up. I have always enjoyed backyard birds. After I retired, I enrolled in 2 Osher bird watching classes taught by Bill Clark and Edge Wade. I now have moved beyond the confines of my yard as a result of Wednesday CACHE trips.

**Most exciting bird ever seen:** Rather than a particular bird being exciting, I find it exciting to go birding because you never know what you are going to see. I have been known to be excited by a Black-capped Chickadee. If I've been birding and suddenly at the end of the day a species appears that I haven't seen that day, that's exciting. It doesn't have to be a "lifer."

**Most recent "lifer"** Wood Stork seen at Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge

**Name:** Julie Fisher, Vice President

**Family:** Husband, Ted; Two grown children, a daughter and son, and one granddaughter and a grandson on the way!

**Profession:** Retired Assoc. Prof. of English, Colorado Mountain College



**Pets:** Two dogs, one cat, two goats, one mini-donkey, six chickens (and yes, they all have names—even the chickens).

**Hobbies:** Reading, gardening, sewing, art, cooking. Oh yes, birding of course, which, I think, is more of a lifestyle than a hobby.

**How long have you lived in Columbia?** Eight years

**How long have you been a member of CAS?** Not long enough! Two years?

**What do you like best about CAS?** That we have so many smart, dedicated members who work together as much as a group of volunteers can toward a common goal of helping to preserve and appreciate our natural world.

**How did you get interested in birding?** I've been interested in birds since I was a child. After I retired from Colorado and moved to Missouri, I decided I needed to learn more about the abundantly beautiful birds in Missouri, so I enrolled in Bill Clark's Osher birding class.

**Most exciting bird ever seen:** Hey, this is a trick question! They're all exciting. But I am always excited to see something unusual on our property. This spring it was a Prothonotary Warbler. The spring before that it was a Blackburnian Warbler. Traveling is always great with Whooping Cranes in Texas and Jabiru in Costa Rica and...see?! But seeing a Snowy Owl, Painted Buntings, Western Wood-Pewee, and Wood Storks right here in Missouri were a few of this year's highlights.

**Most recent "lifer":** Well, I have a confession to make. I don't list. (Unless it's for a SPARKS or CACHE report). For me, I find bird lists much too tedious. Since I can't always remember if I've seen a particular bird, any bird can easily fall into the "lifer" category.



Editor's note: During this publication year, this column will introduce the people who make up CAS—your officers, board member and members of the organization....

## MEET THE 2012-2013 CAS OFFICERS

### Alice Robinson, Secretary

**Family:** husband, Dick; 2 grown sons, 1 daughter-in-law, 2 grand-daughters

**Profession:** Retired RN

**Hobbies:** birding, gardening, reading, crafts

**How long have you lived in**

**Columbia:** 41 years

**How long have you been a member of CAS:** 3 or 4 years

**What do you like best about CAS?** The People

**How did you get interested in birding?** An Osher birding class

**Most exciting bird ever seen:** Greater Roadrunner (after several trips to Jeff City over 2 years!)

**Most recent "lifer"** Rufous Hummingbird in Juneau Alaska (August 2012)



### Eric Seaman Treasurer

**Family:** Denice Adkins (Imperial Overlord)

**Profession:** Sewage/Engineering

**Hobbies:** Hiking, poor home repairs.

**How long have you lived in**

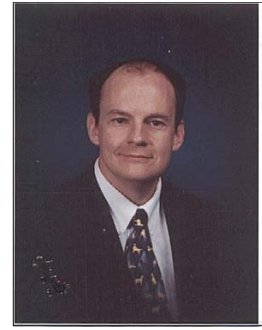
**Columbia?** 12 years

**How long have you been a member of CAS?** 9 years

**What do you like best about CAS?** Nature Areas/ Outreach and Education

**How did you get interested in birding?** Birdfeeding and an excuse to be outdoors.

**Most exciting bird ever seen:** Painted Redstart at Medera Canyon, AZ



## SELECTED WRITINGS FROM LISA SCHENKER'S 2011-2012 4TH GRADE STUDENTS AFTER THEIR CAS FIELD TRIP TO ROCK BRIDGE STATE PARK — MAY 2012

### Eastern Phoebe

Inspired by Walter Bratrud

You climb the rocks like a hiker  
You catch bugs like a bat  
You are talented



### Chubby Cardinal

Inspired by Walter Bratrud

Your chubby red body  
With your awesome Mohawk  
You are cute

### Turkey Vulture

Inspired by Walter Bratrud

You are so ugly  
Yet so helpful  
You are unique



All writings by Nathan Schneider

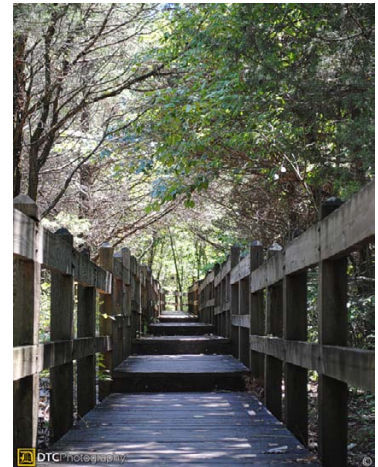
### Rock Bridge

By Heritier Ndisanze

Rock Bridge  
Rock Bridge  
Why are you so beautiful?

Your trees look fantastic  
Birds all over the country  
Come and see you

You are so beautiful!



## STUDYING MISSOURI CHICKADEES FOR FUN AND SKILL IMPROVEMENT

The U.S. has several kinds of chickadees. One, the Siberian Tit (called Gray-headed Chickadee in older field guides) is found only in northern Alaska on this continent. To see the Boreal Chickadee, we have to travel to our northernmost states or to Canada. The Chestnut-backed Chickadee is in the far west, mostly near the coast from mid-California to southeast Alaska. Mountain Chickadees are well-named, for they, sporting their prominent white eyebrow, are found in conifers and mixed woodlands from the Davis mountains of west Texas northward through British Columbia. The Mexican Chickadee population extends into the U.S. only to the Peloncillo Mountains in extreme southwest New Mexico and the Chiricahua Mountains of southeast Arizona.

Avid birders make long and sometimes arduous trips to see those chickadees. We Missourians are very fortunate to have two chickadee species close to home: Black-capped and Carolina. Here in central Missouri, we can occasionally see both species in the same county.

Very generally speaking, black-caps occupy the northern part of Missouri, separated from Carolinas by the Missouri River from the east side at St. Louis to (here comes the difficulty) mid-Missouri, where the black-caps' historic range stays south of the river as the river bends a bit north from Boone County's southern tip, upstream to the north side of Kansas City.

Along the "line" where the two species meet is a "contact zone." The problem for birders is that in this contact zone (and this zone may be moving northward in the central and western part of the state), the two species may hybridize and even learn one another's songs! This may make it impossible to identify every individual in some places.



That's right, we may not be able to place a satisfying name/label on every chickadee we see in Missouri—but we can come closer to that goal with a little time spent looking closely at the chickadees in our back yards and local parks.



**Look at the wings.** On the Black-capped Chickadee the wings have many obvious white lines. These are the white edgings of the greater coverts (feathers that protect the actual flight feathers) and the secondaries and tertials (flight feathers away from the wing tips). Carolinas may show a little white (often none—just plain gray on the wings). But be very careful with this field mark, because in worn, late summer plumage, much of the white edgings may have worn away on the Black-caps.

**Look at the flanks.** The Black-capped has olive to rich buffy flanks; the Carolina has duller, more gray/white flanks with very little or no other color.

**Look at the black bib.** The Black-capped has a somewhat ragged lower edge; the Carolina's bib is a bit shorter and typically has a neater, more even bottom.

**Listen.** The Black-capped has a two-note song, "SEEEEE MEE," with the second note a bit lower than the first. The Carolina's is a four-note, "CAR-O-LI-NA," with the second and fourth notes lower, reflecting how we emphasize the syllables of "Carolina." The Carolina's call, the "chick a dee dee dee" is a bit higher pitched and faster than the Black-capped.

**Watch the bird move.** There is as much as a half-inch difference in size. The slightly shorter tail of the Carolina gives it a more "pot-bellied" effect. Its movements may appear more jerky/bouncy.

**Look at the whole set of features.** Don't make a snap decision based on any one of these ID aids.

All of them are comparisons. For these ID aids to be of any use, you must first become very familiar/comfortable with the species you see most often. Then, when you encounter the other species, the differences will "jump out at you." But, always be beware of the possibility of pesky hybrids and song imitators in south central Missouri.

And while you are enjoying the antics of your backyard chickadees, consider these points:

- Chickadees have a strong social bond with alpha and beta birds calling the shots.
- Mixed feeding flocks of wintering and/or migrant birds often follow the chickadees.
- Chickadees' brains increase in memory capacity by as much as 15% in the late summer to aid in recall of where they cache the winter food supply.

## SPECIAL FIELD TRIP--MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Saturday, October 27th, we will join members of the Burroughs Audubon Society for an all day field trip (CAS hosted Burroughs last year at Eagle Bluffs).

Mike Leahy will lead the birding trip at Knob Noster State Park. Lunch will be at the Panther Steakhouse in Knob Noster (definitely more cafe atmosphere than steakhouse).

We will leave Columbia at 6:30 a.m. in order to be at the state park at 8:00 a.m. Our return time will be set at a later date.

Details for meeting, carpooling and return to Columbia will be posted later. As the date approaches, we will ask for an R.S.V.P. so we can work out cars and drivers to accommodate all.

Please address any questions to Edge Wade: [edgew@mchsi.com](mailto:edgew@mchsi.com)

A few months ago, Columbia Audubon Society received a significant bequest from Joseph "Bo" Koster, Ph.D. who was an assistant professor of medicine at Washington University where he had been a researcher for 20 years. Dr. Koster died unexpectedly in February 2010 at the age of 45.

Dr. Koster conducted research in diabetes and discovered one of the fundamental causes of a rare form of diabetes known as neonatal diabetes. What he discovered may have relevance to more general forms of diabetes.

He loved birds and animals and was an avid bird-watcher, traveling to Africa and Costa Rica. His love of nature was shown not only by his travels but through his bequest of over \$150,000 to both Columbia Audubon Society and the Missouri Prairie Foundation.

The generosity of this bequest presents CAS with opportunities not previously within reach and also responsibilities. The board of directors of CAS is intent on using the funds, so generously given, to further the goals of the CAS mission and at the same time protect and grow the funds. At a June 20<sup>th</sup> special board meeting John Baker, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Central Missouri was invited to give a presentation. Subsequently, the board established Columbia Audubon Society Foundation within the Community Foundation of Central Missouri. The funds will receive the benefit of professional management within the guidelines established by the CAS Board. The establishment of the foundation will also assist the CAS treasurer with the accounting necessary for tax filings and fund tracking.

Although Dr Koster's untimely passing is a loss for his family and friends, we at Columbia Audubon Society hope there is some comfort that they can take from the positive impact his thoughtfulness will accomplish for years to come.

### August Nature Facts from *Missouri Department of Conservation 2012 Natural Events Calendar*

- Hummingbirds begin migrating; numbers around feeders increase
- Look for flocks of purple martins gathering for migration
- Peak of fall warbler migration begins and continues through mid-September



Columbia Audubon Society wants to thank our corporate sponsor:



2010 Chapel Plaza Court, Suite C  
Columbia MO 65203.  
Phone 573-446-5941 or on the web at  
[www.songbirdstation.com](http://www.songbirdstation.com)



## MEMBERSHIP DUES

While spring is the time of year when "a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love," autumn is when other people remember to send in their local CAS membership dues. A little while ago we sent out reminders via email to everyone whose membership will be expiring at the end of August. If you didn't receive a renewal form, or had trouble opening the e-mail version, you can still use the form listed below, or else go to [columbia-audubon.org/membership](http://columbia-audubon.org/membership) to pay online. (And thank you to the third of CAS members who have already sent in dues for the coming year!) If you have any questions about the state of your membership, just e-mail Doug Miller at [support@columbia-audubon.org](mailto:support@columbia-audubon.org).

On a related note, we try to communicate by e-mail as much as possible so that your membership dues aren't wasted on printing and postage. If we don't have your e-mail address yet, please don't forget to send it to Jim Gast ([jgast@centurytel.net](mailto:jgast@centurytel.net)) and/or Doug Miller ([support@columbia-audubon.org](mailto:support@columbia-audubon.org)). And make sure to list both of those addresses as "trusted" in your e-mail software, so that our messages don't disappear into your junk folder.

Thank you!

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### Columbia Audubon Society Membership

Dues support Columbia Audubon Society functions such as the nine issues of our newsletter (*The Chat*<sup>®</sup>), the Christmas Bird Count, educational initiatives with schools, and property maintenance. The membership is for 12 months. Join through PayPal at our website at <http://Columbia-Audubon.org> or make checks payable to the Columbia Audubon Society and mail the check with this form to:

Columbia Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1331, Columbia, MO 65205.

Check membership category:  Student (\$10)     Individual (\$15)     Family (\$25)     Donor (\$50.00)  
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