

# The *Gnat*

Volume 57 Number 2

**Columbia Audubon Society**

October 2014

<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.

## **PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE**

**by Kris Hagglund**

The National Audubon Society recently rolled out its "Birds and Climate Change Report." As might be expected, the report indicates that birds are being affected negatively by climate change. Audubon scientists studies 588 North American species and reported that if climate change continues unabated, the effects could be devastating to birds. To quote the report, "Our models indicate that 314 species will lose more than 50 percent of their current climatic range by 2080. Of the 314 species at risk from global warming, 126 of them are classified as climate endangered. These birds are projected to lose more than 50 percent of their current range by 2050."

Audubon is encouraging everyone to act to protect birds and conserve their habitat. This can be accomplished in many ways and the most needed action is to slow and, potentially reverse (by carbon capture), greenhouse gas emissions. Audubon and Audubon Society of Missouri have asked all of its chapters to participate in advocacy around these issues.

The Columbia Audubon Society does little in the way of direct advocacy. This is not to say that we are not engaged in conservation and education efforts. In fact, our chapter can take pride in its members' work to protect birds, preserve bird habitat, educate our citizens about birds, and collaborate with local community organizations to promote birds and bird habitat. For example, Bill Mees, Allison Vaughn, and John Besser recently submitted a grant proposal to the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative to restore the grassy fields of the Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary and the Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary to natural prairie. CAS also participates in the Christmas Bird Count, helps run the "Band With Nature" field trip for 2nd-graders in Columbia Public Schools, and manages the Eastern Bluebird nest boxes for the City of Columbia, to name just a few of our beneficial endeavors. We are not engaged in direct advocacy, however. In

fact, the Conservation Committee Chair has been open for some time now.

The CAS Board discussed our lack of advocacy efforts during its last meeting. Although all board members endorsed CAS participating in advocacy under the direction of the National Audubon Society, there was no clear path to accomplishing this goal. Advocacy is a challenging activity, especially when it involves endorsing conservation policy among local, state, and federal lawmakers. Despite the dire warnings of scientists, no substantive federal policy has been enacted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions during this session of Congress. Advocacy to stop and reverse climate change seems like a Sisyphean task.

How do we reconcile our beliefs with our inaction? Allow me to offer that we continue and expand our current initiatives and projects to educate, conserve, and protect. CAS' projects are beneficial for birds and humans. Then, let's take some "baby steps" toward advocacy by following the lead of the National Audubon Society. All of us can dedicate a few minutes or maybe even an hour each week to advocate on behalf of birds. Here is one way to start (you may think of others): visit <http://climate.audubon.org/> to learn more about the Birds and Climate Change Report. From there, you can link to Audubon's suggestions for six things that you can do to protect birds. Perhaps you will be willing to commit to doing one or two (or all six) of these suggestions? If we all take some advocacy baby steps, we will be doing some real good. And, who knows, maybe it won't be long until we are running.



Upcoming meeting information on Page 2



## CAS MEETING

**Wednesday, October 15 , 2014—7:00 p.m.**

**Unitarian Universalist Church—2615 Shepard Boulevard**

**Speaker: Allison Vaughn, Natural Resources Steward  
for the Ozarks**

**“Glade Mapping Project and its Implications for Birds”**

In a collaborative effort with the Central Hardwoods Joint Venture, a team of Missouri ecologists embarked on a project to systematically map glades in Missouri using aerial imagery and field verification. This five year process resulted in a map of over 80,000 glades located throughout Missouri. The Missouri glade distribution map is an effort to classify, describe, and map restorable glade natural communities throughout Missouri where thought to occur. Managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Glade Distribution Map provides baseline spatial data for land managing agencies, conservation organizations and private landowners interested in management/protection of glade habitats and scientific study/monitoring. Spatial data about glades support active conservation assessments, resource management, and strategic conservation planning needs. Analysis of the data provides the structural framework for answering critical scientific questions about glade natural communities.

The glade mapping process involved ArcMap 10, a geo-spatial referencing program that allows

importation of various maps and data. We chose 610 7.5 minute quadrangle maps across Missouri thought most likely to contain locations for glade natural communities. Based on the published glade definition from the Terrestrial Natural Communities of Missouri (Nelson, 2010), we determined the extent of glade quality, size and limitations for the mapping of glades. Each 7.5 minute quadrangle map was divided into linear grids and scanned using the combination of leaf off and infra-red imagery to interpret various image signatures. Various landscapes were field examined for presumed glade patterns to validate image interpretations.

Throughout the process, field verification remained an integral part of checking for accuracy. Glades that had been destroyed by mining, development, or reservoir construction were excluded from the map. However, especially in the glade landscape around Branson, glades were detected and verified as part of subdivisions. Glade natural communities in Missouri remain the state’s best opportunity for the protection of prairie vegetation. With the glade distribution map, land management agencies and private landowners will have a better idea of the presence of these fascinating places- many of them undiscovered by natural features inventories but now made known.



**Lodge Glade at Ha-Ha Tonka State Park**

Photo submitted by Allison Vaughn

Article submitted by Allison Vaughn

# Field Trips

## Lori Turner, Field Trip Chair

### Sunday, October 12th The Big Sit And Possibly The Swallow Gathering

**Destination:** Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge, 16194 Swan Lake Ave. Sumner, MO 64681

**Departure Point:** Patricia's Foods, 900 N. Keene St. Columbia, MO. Lori will lead the first carpool, which will leave at 5 a.m. and the 2nd at 7:30 a.m. which will be led by Edge. Edge has room for 3 in her vehicle and Lori has room for 3. Please contact Edge or Lori to reserve a seat or to volunteer to drive.

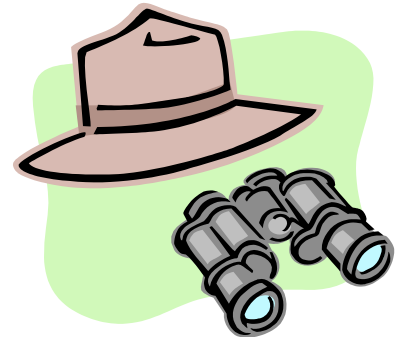
**Leaders:** Lori Turner and Edge Wade

**Contact Info:** Lori [loricatrips@gmail.com](mailto:loricatrips@gmail.com) Edge [edgew@mchsi.com](mailto:edgew@mchsi.com)

We will join the Grand River Audubon Society (GRAS) for 'The Big Sit' on the observation deck at Swan Lake NWR. This entails participants sitting in a circle with a 17 ft. radius facing outward. That way we have a 360° vantage point. The goal is to see as many bird species as possible in a 24-hour period; this does not mean we all have to be there for 24 hours. GRAS will have a BBQ going for lunch so please bring a side for the pot luck.

The Swallow Gathering is a natural phenomenon in which a million, maybe more, swallows come together before migration like a cloud and 'fall out' of the sky to roost at dusk in a corn field. This usually happens every year in Chariton County starting mid-September to mid-October, depending on the corn harvest time. Thanks to Steve Kinder and friends who scout out where and when they are roosting each year we all have the chance of witnessing this spectacle that should be on everyone's bucket list. In the past the peak viewing is on the night of 'The Big Sit'. We won't know until just a few days before. If it's a different day we will have a separate field trip with a choice of having dinner at a Bed and Breakfast nearby.

This gathering is really hard to imagine without seeing it in person, I went last year and took some videos so if anyone is interested in seeing one, please message me [loricatrips@gmail.com](mailto:loricatrips@gmail.com)



### Saturday, October 18th

**Destination:** Lake of the Ozarks State Park, Rocky Top Trailhead

**Departure Point:** AC Commuter Parking Lot

**Leader:** Allison Vaughn

**Contact Info:** [allisonjv@yahoo.com](mailto:allisonjv@yahoo.com)

We'll carpool from the AC Commuter Parking Lot at 7:30 a.m. The lot is on the southeast corner of the AC exit off Hwy 63 on Lenoir St. If you're not joining the carpool, meet at Rocky Top Trailhead at 9:00 a.m. After the trip we'll have lunch at Shawnee Bluff Winery.

Rocky Top Trail is a wonderful example of just how important fire is to maintaining native glades and woodlands that once dominated the landscapes of this region. It consists of 2 loops, joining a half mile from the trailhead, totaling 2 miles of nature viewing. For a map of the trail please visit: <http://mostateparks.com/trails/lake-ozarks-state-park ex.asp>

### Saturday, November 1st – Joint Field Trip With River Bluffs Audubon Society

**Destination:** Runge Conservation Nature Center and Binder Lake, Jefferson City, MO

**Departure Point:** AC Commuter Parking Lot

**Leader:** Jane Frazier and Rich George

**Contact Info:** Lori Turner [loricatrips@gmail.com](mailto:loricatrips@gmail.com)

We'll carpool from the AC Commuter Parking Lot at 7:30 a.m. The lot is on the southeast corner of the AC exit off Hwy 63 on Lenoir St. If you're not joining the carpool, meet at Runge Nature Center at 8:00 a.m. After the trip we'll have lunch near Binder Lake at Dudley's Café.

(Note: Dudley's Café only takes cash)

Directions to Runge: In Jefferson City take Hwy 50 west off 63. Take the Hwy 179 exit and go north, toward Jamestown, about a mile. Runge will be on your left.

# FIELD TRIPS

(CONTINUED)

## Lori Turner, Field Trip Chair

### Saturday, November 8th

**Destination:** Columbia Audubon Society Albert Children's Wildlife Area

**Departure Point:** Patricia's Foods, 900 N. Keene Street, Columbia, MO (north parking lot)

**Leader:** John Besser

**Contact Info:** Cell (573) 639-2211 or jbesser1@gmail.com

We will leave Patricia's Foods parking lot at 10:00 a.m. Here's your chance to bird a high-quality but rarely visited Audubon Nature Area. The Albert area is located about a 15-minute drive northeast of Columbia on the Boone/Callaway county line. Our property (about 80 acres) is part of a larger tract that has been extensively reclaimed after a history of coal strip-mining. Reclamation has left a great mixture of habitats, including a grassland-shrubland-wetland complex along Cedar Creek. Target birds will include late-migrant grassland birds, such as Nelson's and Le Conte's Sparrows, which haven't been seen here yet so it will be fun trying to increase the species list for this area.

Check out the CAS website at for more information on the area <http://columbia-audubon.org/>

We'll carpool to the area, because vehicle access is limited. Most birding will be on foot, on and off trails, so come prepared for wet ground and insect pests. The group should be back at Patricia's Foods by 1 or 2 p.m.

## CAS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR PRAIRIE SEED COLLECTION

by John Besser, Nature Area Chair

Seed collection is underway for the CANS/Bonnie View prairie restoration project. The goal of this project is to transform over 13 acres of fescue pasture into a beautiful and bird-friendly prairie and savanna habitat. Starting this fall, and continuing through the growing season next year, we will organize teams of volunteers to collect seeds of wildflowers and grasses from prairie remnants and restored prairie habitats throughout central Missouri. These trips will not be long (usually about two hours) or physically demanding, and they will let you explore and learn about prairie habitats in your backyard. Volunteers should bring gloves, pruning shears/clippers, water, sunhat and a belt (to hang a seed collection bag).

We hope to have a half dozen seed collecting trips this fall, and we have three planned for October:

**October 11:** Becky Erickson will lead a group to Whitley Trust land near Pinnacles in northern Boone County. The group will meet at Patricia's Supermarket (near the dumpster) at 12:30 p.m. The collection sites are near the road and are flat. We will work about 2 hours, then return to Patricia's by 4 p.m.

**October 18:** Prairie Fork Conservation Area. This is a large prairie restoration project in Callaway County on land owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Prairie Foundation. Tentative plan is to carpool. Meet at Patricia's at 1 p.m., but we may change the departure time to join a seed collection group led by area manager Chris Newbold. Leader: John Besser

**October 25:** This will be a *combined birding and seed collection trip* to Rocky Fork conservation area north of Columbia. We'll meet at the fishing dock on the north side of the main lake at 9 a.m. and bird for a couple of hours, take a break for a sack lunch (or a lunch run to Heuer's Country Store). We'll leave from the dock at 12:30 p.m. and then drive (4WD vehicles) to a little-known prairie remnant for a couple hours of seed collection. Leaders: John Besser (birding), Becky Erickson (seed collection).

These plans are subject to change, so if you are interested in any of these trips please contact the leader so you can be informed of any changes. We will post updated information about these trips and future trips on the CAS website.

John Besser [email [jbesser1@gmail.com](mailto:jbesser1@gmail.com); cell 573-639-2211]

Becky Erickson [email [beckyerick711@centurylink.net](mailto:beckyerick711@centurylink.net); cell 573-657-2314]



## Birding trip—no binoculars needed!

### *"Feathered Friends:*

### *Six Decades of Watercolor Painting of Birds"*

by David Plank

is on display at Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art  
Central Methodist University in Fayette, Missouri

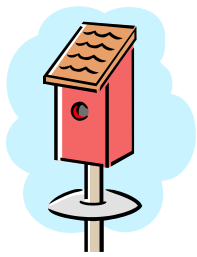
August 31 to November 20.

Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

1:30—4:30 p.m.



Young birders (and some adults) who attended the September CAS field trip



## World's largest bird seed, feeder, bird house and accessories **\$ale!**

**Saturday—October 18—8 a.m. to noon**

**Songbird Station/Gold Crest Distributing Warehouse **\$ale****

**1600 Bassford Drive—Mexico MO 65265**

## **SEVEN LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT eBIRD**

**by Greg Leonard, Lori Turner, and Kevin Wehner**

When entering distance traveled, only record the distance traveled in one direction. For example, when driving into Eagle Bluffs only record the distance from the start of the refuge to where you turn around, not the round trip. Go to [www.daftlogic.com](http://www.daftlogic.com) for a useful, free Google maps distance calculator.

eBird understands that not every bird seen in the field can be identified, but you should always submit a complete checklist and count every species you see even if it is a House Sparrow or European Starling.

Always estimate the number of each species seen instead of using 'X'. By using 'X' you are telling eBird that you saw anywhere from one bird to over a million making your checklist less valuable to scientists. 'X' is used when entering historic checklists and you do not remember how many you saw.

When entering species in the BirdLog app you can use the four letter species code. Example: if you saw/heard 5 Bluebirds, type in 5, press space, EABL.

eBird Checklist Sharing is an easy way to link multiple lists together from one birding field trip. The checklist can be shared with individuals by email or eBird username. The field trip participants can then accept or reject the checklist. Once accepted, the list can be edited to reflect exactly which bird species you identified.

Slash combinations are used when you've narrowed the identification to two birds. An example: Western/Eastern Meadowlark

Area Count is an observation type used when you walk around an area and cover the same ground for more than 20 minutes. This creates extremely valuable information used to calculate density for an area. Examples include a thorough survey of your yard or local park, as long as you know the acreage. Go to [www.daftlogic.com](http://www.daftlogic.com) for a useful, free Google maps acreage calculator.

For more information and tips, refer to <http://help.ebird.org/>

**Happy**   
**Halloween**



Columbia Audubon Society wants to  
thank our corporate sponsor:

**Songbird Station**

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)

**Columbia Audubon Society**

**P.O. Box 1331**

**Columbia MO 65205**