

# The Chat



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**Columbia Audubon Society**  
<http://columbia-audubon.org>

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

The mission of the 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

### Meeting our Mission

Falling leaves and early sunsets sometimes elicit reflections on the seemingly brief summer, on the year and its tragedies and triumphs, and on our places in the world. Columbia Audubon Society has experienced the passing of birding friends and leaders, and the expressions of joy and wonder of 2nd graders seeing a Great Horned Owl up close. We also continue to make progress in reclaiming and restoring land that will promote the welfare and populations of birds and other creatures (including ourselves, ultimately). So, as we approach Thanksgiving, we have much to be thankful for.

We can also be grateful that we have more to accomplish. The Christmas Bird Count will be here soon and more volunteers are needed. Yours truly will be spending the day in commencement exercises, all the while wishing I could be out counting. Who will pick up the slack? Nearly always there is someone in CAS who is willing to go the extra mile. We would need less sacrifice if we had more members, and increased participation among our members.

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## MEETING OUR MISSION, CONTINUED.

CAS will soon be launching an initiative to recruit new members, especially the next generation of birders. You will be asked to distribute our newly developed CAS business cards to people you see while out birding, or walking on a trail, or at one of the farmer's markets, etc, as an easy source of information and inspiration to those who may be interested in our mission. The Board is also asking you to bring others to the meetings! We have terrific speakers scheduled for November and for the 2015 meetings. Why not ask a friend or neighbor to come try us out? Bring your older children, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren. In addition, tell your ideas for recruiting new members and increasing participation among current ones to the Board members, who are here to listen to ideas and launch important initiatives and projects.

The Board will also be starting an initiative to raise money for CAS to further pursue projects that meet its mission. The current operating budget is in great shape now and for the foreseeable future, and CAS has a substantial endowment for a group of its size. The endowment is mostly secured away in conservative investments. However, the Society has been reticent to spend much of its endowment because there is not a lot of gift money flowing into the endowment. That is a situation we can change. Birders are passionate people with strong beliefs about conservation, preservation and promotion of birds, enjoyment of the beauty of birds and other species, and the education of youth about these important matters. CAS will provide a venue for those who want to promote their beliefs through giving financially, and will use these funds to accomplish tangible projects that reflect these beliefs. If you want to be a part of this initiative or have ideas, please tell a Board member. We look forward to hearing from you and to seeing you at the meetings.

*- Kris Hagglund, President*

## NOTES FROM YOUR NEW EDITOR

With this issue of the Chat, the newsletter's production will pass from Jan Mees to myself. Aided by my wife Joanna, to whom I owe my love of birding, I'll seek to maintain the qualities of this newsletter that members appreciate while working to build on its success at sharing information, ideas, stories and more from the world of central Missouri birding & beyond. For example, I've already discussed with Doug Miller (manager of the CAS website) possibilities for producing a mobile-friendly version of the Chat that can be easily read on smaller devices. In this issue you'll see another goal of mine, adding more stories about local field trips or other birding experiences members have had, to help educate & inspire us all about the fascinating world that birding opens up to us. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas, content, or feedback that will help me do the best job possible.

*- Eric Reuter, [eric@chert hollowfarm.com](mailto:eric@chert hollowfarm.com) (573) 474-0989*

## FIELD TRIPS

**Lori Turner, Field Trip Chair**

### **Seed collection trip to Wild Haven Nature Area**

**Date & Time:** Saturday, November 1, 1:00 p.m.

**Departure Point:** Meet on-site, 6900 E. O'Rear Road, north of Columbia.

**Leader:** John Besser, jbesser1@gmail.com

Meet at the picnic shelter at 1 PM for an easy seed collection outing. We'll start by collecting seed from the plantings near the picnic shelter, then take the short hike to a native meadow. We should be done by 3 or 4 PM.

**November 8 birding field trip to CAS Albert Nature Area has been CANCELED -- sorry!.**

### **Twin Lakes and Hinkson Woods Conservation Area**

**Date & Time:** Saturday, November 22nd , 8:00 a.m.

**Departure Point:** Songbird Station, 2010 Chapel Plaza Court #C, Columbia, MO

**Leader:** Lori Turner, loricastrips@gmail.com

We will leave Songbird Station's parking lot at 8 a.m. The trip will be 3 hours long and return to Songbird Station's parking lot.

## NEXT CAS MEETING

**Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.  
Unitarian Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Boulevard**

**Dylan Kesler**

Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences, University of Missouri

### **"Avian Movements in a Changing World"**

Recent developments in study methods and tracking technologies have brought about great advances in our understandings of movement and population connectivity in mobile animals. Birds make fascinating subjects for studying movement ecology because they exhibit a broad range of movement characteristics, from small-scale home ranging resident species that disperse short distances to migratory species that transit the globe many times throughout their lives. This talk will review recent studies into the factors that affect how, where, and when birds move.

## FIELD TRIP TO ROCKY FORK CONSERVATION AREA



As a thick fog resisted the rising sun, seven birders scanned the shoreline thickets of Rocky Fork Lake in northern Boone County. Abundant Robins and Yellow-Rumped Warblers flitted in and out of view as other species steadily made themselves known. Though we would walk over two miles round trip over the next few hours, over half the day's species count would be found right here within yards of the parking lot.

Eventually the sun gained the upper hand as we walked northeast, meeting a few duck hunters along the way; their hopeful calls were not recorded in our species list. By mid-morning, we were high on a ridge of prairie grass overlooking the deep cuts of the area's coal-mining history, tasting ripe persimmons and wishing for a hawk or two in the crisp blue sky. A lone Red-Shouldered Hawk called from the horizon.

Heading back, we were treated to a fleeting glimpse of an unusual waterbird, likely a Horned Grebe, which dove and did not reappear. With half an hour remaining, we explored another road leading up a ridge of tall pines. Here we filled out our woodpecker bingo card for the day with six species, including nice views of a Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker. By noon, we'd notched 28 bird species seen or heard, discussed various native and invasive plants, and experienced a wide variety of natural habitats on a beautiful Missouri fall day. Special mention goes to the mouse we found claiming squatter's rights in an abandoned bird's nest in a thicket of invasive shrubs.

In the afternoon, five dedicated souls spent several more hours collecting prairie seed from a little-known corner of Rocky Fork. We focused on an abundance of Elliot's broomsedge, along with lesser quantities of rattlesnake master, rough blazingstar, and wild petunia. The seed gathered from this and many other trips will be used for a planned 2015 seeding of the 13 acre CAS/Fairview/Bonneview Park area.

*- Photos & text by Eric Reuter*





## UPCOMING CAS MEETINGS & EVENTS

### **December 20: Christmas Bird Count and Chili Supper**

As part of the annual national Audubon event, we will count birds within a 7 mile radius centered roughly in Rock Bridge State Park, an area we have counted for decades. The circle is broken into 13 areas with somewhat arbitrary boundaries encompassing geographic areas such as Eagle Bluffs.

Each area has a leader familiar with the area with many leaders having done the area for decades and a few leaders filling in holes. It again looks like the majority of leaders will be the same as last year and will be contacting other team members over the next weeks. If you know that you want to count in an area where you have counted before, let the team leader know. If you have never done it before, or have a desire to try a different area, call Laura Hillman (442-3703) and leave a message; she will try to get you in a spot that needs more members. Most teams count from sun-up to late afternoon but will sometimes take members for morning or afternoon.

The main reason to stop counting (other than freezing!) is to attend the Chili Supper where the tallied results of the 13 areas will be collated to give a grand circle total for each species known to be seen in the circle. The Chili Supper is held at the Community of Christ, 1111 Fairview Rd., at 6:00 p.m. There is no charge, but the organizers will be looking for volunteers to bring dishes to the meal. The variety and goodness is usually spectacular. Lori Hagglund (Hagglund.Lori@gmail.com) is in charge of the supper so please contact her to volunteer chili and other goodies.

### **January 21**

**Presenter:** Frank Thompson, USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station  
**"The Ecology of Songbirds during the Post-Fledging Period"**

The period of time directly after young birds leave the nest and before they disperse or migrate is an understudied life stage for songbirds and is referred to as the post-fledging period. Dr. Frank Thompson and colleagues recently published a review on survival of birds during the post-fledging period to synthesize current knowledge on factors affecting survival. Dr. Thompson will present the findings of their review as well as talk about several of the early and more recent studies on post-fledging wood thrush, Acadian flycatchers, and ovenbirds that were conducted by graduate students working with him and John Faaborg in Missouri.

### **February 18**

**Presenter:** Mike Szydlowski K-12 Science Coordinator, Columbia Public Schools

Mike will update us on the progress of the Nature School opening in Fall of 2015 at Rockbridge State Park as well as ways that we may be actively involved.



Columbia Audubon Society wants to thank our corporate sponsor:

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