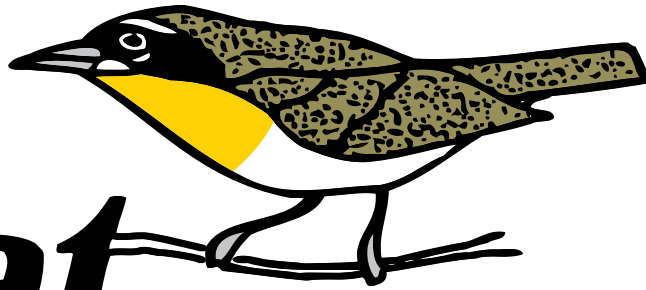


The Chat



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Columbia Audubon Society
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December 2016

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.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Last month I wrote about interacting with birds at the annual second-grade Banding with Nature field trip sponsored by CAS; most kids had a lot of fun but a few were scared. So this month I'll turn to adults, and how they can interact with birds this December: they can count them as part of the annual Christmas Bird Count on December 17th. To conduct this long-running citizen-science event, CAS has followed the standards laid out by National Audubon to delineate a standard counting area. To envision this process, find a Boone County map and draw a circle with a radius of seven miles, centered near Rock Bridge State Park. Divide that circle into eight smaller areas, decide that five of them are still too big, and break those down into 1N and 1S and so on to get 13 total counting areas. Then round up at least 50 birders, or people who want to become birders, and try to fairly distribute them between the 13 areas. Convince 13 special birders to become area leaders, responsible for the counts: the number of species, the number of birds for each species, and the total number of birds counted. On Saturday December 17, 2016, all those folks will get up before dawn,

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Edited by
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FROM THE PRESIDENT, CONTINUED

- *continued from previous page* put on warm clothes, and report to their assigned groups and areas to spend the day observing and counting birds. But that's not all: at the end of the day, we add up counts for all 13 areas and enter them into a computer so that the data can be reported to National Audubon along with all the other data collected by citizen scientists around the world. This final tally is conducted at the Christmas Bird Count Chili Supper, on the evening of December 17 when we're all cold and ready for hot food and warm companionship. Are you coming? Need a group to join? Call me at 573-397-1010. - by Laura Hillman

CAN I ENTER MY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INTO EBIRD?

Although the CBC is run by National Audubon, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology encourages birders to enter their counts into eBird as well. These guidelines for the proper way to do so are reprinted from online with permission. - by Eric Reuter

It is not a problem to enter data in eBird and then submit it for the CBC too, since the two projects are collecting data in similar ways, but at different scales.

- 1) Entering data for the CBC and for eBird presents no problem at all. Indeed, one day we envision the possibility of entering your eBird list and having it automatically contribute to the CBC.
- 2) Most CBC circles are divided into multiple sectors, with teams of people ("parties") covering each sector. Remember that eBird counts are single-party counts, so any data collected during the CBC season should be entered for single parties only, not parties that spend a lot of time split up. (See more on the problem with multi-party counts being entered in eBird here: <http://ow.ly/IcZ1306EAqa>)
- 3) The official CBC effort does not permanently store information at the "sector" level. eBird provides an opportunity to permanently record those data. For example, most coastal counts will have a substantially different mix of birds on the open beach versus areas 5 or 10 miles inland. eBird thrives on location specificity, so stores these data at a finer scale.
- 4) While eBird works best with location specific sightings, it can be time consuming to enter multiple lists from a single day. We certainly appreciate those who take the time to break a day of birding into discrete stops, especially from hotspots like parks and refuges. However, a day-long traveling count or area count is not inappropriate. The important thing is that you describe what you did (accurate mileage, duration etc.). -continued on next page

CAN I ENTER MY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INTO EBIRD, CONTINUED

- 5) If you do use a day-long count to enter your count, please give some thought as to the location that you use. Please do not plot your point at a 'hotspot' if you spent significant time birding outside of the hotspot area. It is far better to plot a new point to represent the CBC sector, and to name it in a way that makes it clear what it represents -- such as "Lakeville CBC--Sector 5". Since hotspot summaries depend on data collected at the actual point, the bar charts and other summaries become much less meaningful when they include data from outside the location.
- 6) Traveling counts with accurate mileage and duration are preferred over area counts. Most CBC territories encompass much more area than you are able to cover, so the mileage is a better measure. As with the CBC, you should subtract your miles spent backtracking. eBird just wants the one way distance of the mileage you covered. For example, if you walk two miles along a trail to check a lake, and then return on the same trail, the total mileage should be 2 (not 4) and the duration should be the entire time spent for the out-and-back trip.

USING EBIRD MOBILE IN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Cornell has also published guidelines for using the eBird Mobile app for recording birds during the Christmas Bird Count. Cornell encourages the collection of bird count data on your mobile device, following some basic recommendations (reprinted from the eBird website with permission). - by Eric Reuter

- 1) Collect your checklists in eBird Mobile all day long. Be sure to carefully check your list after each stop. We find that it is best *not* to submit until the end of the day, since species that get inadvertently left off are hard to correct once submitted and are left off the tally feature below.
- 2) At the end of the day, click Trip Summary and open your "Day Total". If you did owling or birding that you don't want counted, you can define a customized period across which to tally the birds using the "Trip Summary" option.
- 3) Double-check the eBird Mobile list and tallies.

NOTE: For Android users, the "Trip Summary" feature is not yet available. It is still great to use eBird to tally your observations. If you keep data from multiple locations that you need to add up, you can then add them up by hand, use Download My Data to download in excel and tally them there, or make a Trip Report in eBird. If you select the day of the CBC as your start date and then select only the locations you visited on the count then you should be able to get an accurate tally for the day.

'TIS THE SEASON

December 1st marks the beginning of the 2016 CoMoGives campaign. This campaign provides a single website (comogives.com) where residents can make donations to any of 92 community organizations.

Columbia Audubon Society (CAS) participates in this event because membership dues are not sufficient to fund all CAS activities associated with our mission. Donated funds cover the tuition for two educators to attend National Audubon's Hog Island training program for classroom teachers. Funds are available to provide need-based scholarships for students to attend the Tetons Summer Science School. CAS has utilized donated funds to restore native prairie at Columbia Audubon and Bonnie View Nature Sanctuaries and would like to continue those efforts. CAS has been an active participant with Columbia Public Schools to purchase herbicide for the eradication of Bush Honeysuckle in Columbia's parks. Donations also help fund the 2nd grade field trip that brings 1,000 students into an outdoor classroom for a hands-on learning experience at Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary.

The CoMoGives event begins December 1st and ends December 31st and is conducted entirely online. Donations can be designated in honor or memory of friends and/or family. Acknowledgment of these donations will be made appropriately. Gifts will NOT result in unwanted solicitations. Columbia Audubon Society would appreciate your support during this time of holiday giving. - *by Bill Mees*

COLUMBIA AUDUBON SOCIETY



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What we do:

The mission of Columbia Audubon Society (CAS) 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.

Why we're great:

CAS funds a field trip for 1000 2nd graders to learn, out in nature. CAS pays tuition for 2 teachers to attend a National Audubon camp. CAS provides scholarships for students to attend Tetons Nature Camp. CAS is building a real prairie in Columbia

Why we deserve your support:

CAS is more than birds. We preserve and restore nature's habitats. We educate students and teachers about nature and biodiversity. The 28 acre Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary is our gift to Columbia residents to experience the wonders of nature.

What we need:

Your financial support allows CAS to expand educational programs and habitat restoration projects.

2016 FIELD TRIPS

There are no field trips scheduled for December, other than the Christmas Bird Count on December 17. Please contact Field Trip coordinator Eric Wood, ewood802@yahoo.com with any questions about upcoming field trips.

POST-FLEDGING SURVIVAL OF SONGBIRDS

At the November CAS meeting, avian ecologist Julie Jenkins discussed her research at MU regarding the survival rates of Acadian Flycatchers and Ovenbirds during the period immediately after fledging. Working in three nearby forest areas, she and her team carefully located and monitored nests of both species, fitting young birds with tiny radio transmitters just before fledging. This approach allowed her to track the birds' early dispersal from the nest and assess their habitat use, predation rate, and other factors related to early survival. Far more Acadian Flycatchers survived this period than Ovenbirds (~90% and ~50%, respectively), a difference likely related to predation, as ground-nesting Ovenbirds are more prone to predators like snakes. Indeed, during the talk Jenkins passed around a series of used transmitters for the audience to examine, including several bagged specimens that had been recovered after passing through the digestive tract of a snake.

She also presented evidence that these two species, like some other songbirds, use very different habitats once fledged than while nesting. While both species prefer mature woodland for nesting, both also disperse to shrubbier, mixed, edge-type habitat post-fledging (including some adults). Such results can help land managers make better choices for encouraging the survival of young songbirds. To read more about this work, visit: <http://ow.ly/1Ab2306Bq0W> *- by Eric Reuter*

GENETIC INFLUENCES ON BIRD MIGRATION ROUTES

A recent study from the University of British Columbia fitted Swainson's Thrushes with tracking devices to monitor their migration paths within western North America, in hopes of learning whether the birds' genetics helped control their choice of flight path. A writeup in Smithsonian Magazine summarized the findings:

"...the species is split into two subgroups that migrate along very different routes...Every spring both return to Canada and—here's the key—sometimes interbreed. Sorting through the tracking data, the researchers found that the hybrid offspring favored a flyway that was in between those of the two subspecies. Since the hybrid thrushes couldn't have learned that middle road, it seems that the birds were guided by a mixture of genetic instructions inherited from both parents."

To read more, visit: <http://ow.ly/hu7K306Brj5>

- by Eric Reuter

CAS BOARD MEETING MINUTES, OCTOBER 19, 2016

*Archives of past meeting minutes may be found at <http://columbia-audubon.org/meetings.php>
These minutes were approved at the November CAS board meeting.*

Present: Lori Hagglund, Laura Hillman, Nancy Bedan, Eric Seaman, Bill Mees, Eric Wood, Lori Turner, John Besser, Lottie Bushmann, Doug Miller, and Allison Vaughn

Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed. Nancy B moved to accept them as is. John B seconded.

The monthly treasurer's report was presented. John B moved to approve it as written. Eric W seconded.

Laura H attended the Community Foundation meeting. Their number of participating organizations is increasing. They are happy to have CAS with them.

Band With Nature went very well. One of the 3 field trip days was canceled due to forecast rain. About 800 2nd-graders total attended the other 2 days. MRBO caught birds for each class. Next year we will schedule the event for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday so as to allow for rain days. This should not increase costs, but will make it more likely that all the classes who sign up will be able to come.

The CoMo Gives Committee met recently. They are developing a survey for our members and Facebook friends about their participation in and expectations of CAS. Completion of the survey will enter each individual into a drawing for a \$50 Songbird Station gift certificate. We're promoting CoMo Gives in a couple of Chats and will make a plea at the CBC Chili Supper. Person-to-person contact is the most effective way to increase giving and we want to encourage our members to talk to people.

John B evaluated the progress of the CANS prairie wildflowers. He found about 25 different species coming up. Bill M met with John Williams, a beekeeper, about hosting a couple of bee colonies at CANS. We could use the bees to educate about pollinators and the bees could help increase the spread of the wildflowers. Eric W motioned that we ok the hives. Nancy B seconded.

Eric W has added several field trips to the schedule. John B suggested organizing a trip to Riverlands. We also may do a Big Sit at Eagle Bluffs next October.

Doug M reported 2 new members and almost all renewals complete.

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CAS BOARD MEETING MINUTES, CONTINUED

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Laura H received a request from a school for birdseed. We have \$250 in the budget for seed for teachers who sign up for Project Feederwatch. Lottie B will ask Lisa S if she will organize teacher sign-up for the program.

About 15 people attended the general meeting and enjoyed a presentation by Susan Flader on Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites: Challenges of Our Times.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Hagglund
Secretary
Columbia Audubon Society

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Blvd, Columbia.

Saturday, December 17th, 2016

Annual Christmas Bird Count and chili supper. The potluck will start at 6 p.m. at Fairview Road Community of Christ Church, 1111 S. Fairview Road in Columbia. Table service and hot and cold drinks will be provided. Contributions of food in the categories of chili or other soup/stew; chips, cornbread, and/or chili toppings; side dishes; and desserts are welcome, and supper organizer Lori Hagglund would be grateful if you'd let her know ahead of time at (573) 445 8205 what you plan to bring if possible!

Wednesday, January 18th, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

Presenter: Lori McCurdy, Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture

Lori will talk about the programs CUA runs with Columbia Public Schools, as well as her outdoor classroom program.

Wednesday, February 15th, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

Presenter: Brad and Suzanne Wright, Mussel Fork Legacy Marsh, LLC

Brad and Suzanne will talk about buying and managing land for recreational benefits, and the "Life of a Wetland Reserve Program" project (60 days of duck hunting, 305 days of birding).

Wednesday, March 15th, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

Presenter: John Burk, Turkey Federation.

Turkey Federation activities and on-the-ground restoration efforts.



Columbia Audobon Society wants to thank our corporate sponsor:

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