

wingbeat



Burroughs Audubon

Volume 55, Issue 2

May 2003

General Meetings

**General meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.
Conservation meetings precede at 6:30 p.m.**

When? The first Thursday of each month. Cookies and coffee start at 6:30 p.m.

Where? Missouri Department of Conservation Discovery Center 4750 Troost K.C. MO

June 5 "Humorous Happenings" Former MDC State Ornithologist James D. Wilson will muse on happenings in his 25 year career with the MDC. A Pot Luck Dinner and Open House will be available to watch birds, meet and eat with "Jim" prior to the meeting, hosted by The Koshlands, 24406 Timberlake Trail, Greenwood, 3:30 p.m. dinner at 5:30 p.m.. Call Marilyn, 816-537-5988, for directions.

Fall programs will include Roger Boyd, Birding in England; Matt Gearheart, Adventures in Africa; Ed McCullough Adventures in Photography; Roger McNeill, Birding ID Workshop.

Have a great summer and see you in September! Don't hesitate to suggest programs to Marilyn Koshland, 816-537-5988, to further fill in our 2004 calendar!

Responsible Backyard Birdwatching: Minimize Mosquito Habitat

As the weather warms up and our thoughts turn to getting outdoors and watching birds, please keep in mind an important area where you can play an important role in the health of birds in your own backyard.

In order to minimize the impact of the West Nile Virus and other diseases on the bird populations in this area, responsible homeowners should keep their

feeders and birdbaths clean. Replace birdbath water every few days and occasionally clean your feeders with a mild bleach solution.

To help slow down the spread of the West Nile Virus, please survey your property for areas that could attract mosquitoes to breed. Watch for old tires, buckets, pool covers, clogged gutters or any other

areas that could help water stand for 3 days or more.

You can also help by passing these tips along to your neighbors and co-workers! For information on the West Nile monitoring and reaction plan for Kansas City, go the KC, MO website at www.kcmo.org and search for "West Nile".

Ed McCullough

From the President's Nest

Support the Cats Indoors! Program

On the front page of this newsletter, you can read an article about the responsibility of homeowners to minimize mosquito breeding habitat, which in turn helps slow the spread of the West Nile Virus and other diseases. Another important way homeowners can promote healthy bird populations is to support the Cats Indoors! Program.

This campaign was founded by the American Bird Conservancy and is supported by the National Audubon Society. Cats Indoors! advocates the responsible ownership of cats by keeping them indoors, as well as controlling feral cat populations. Research associated with the campaign estimates (conservatively) that over 100 million birds per year are taken by feral and domestic cats.

No matter how well-fed a cat is, it has natural instincts to hunt and kill birds and other prey. Research shows that these instincts and urges are controlled by a different area of the brain than the hunger centers.

Remember that cats are an introduced species, having been domesticated in Egypt and brought to this continent only a few hundred years ago. By keeping cats indoors, you can also greatly extend their lifespan. A cat spending most of its life outdoors may only live for a few years, while an "indoor only" cat will usually live for 12-17 years. The Cats Indoors! Program promotes the well-being of both cats and birds, and discusses ways of transitioning your cats from an outdoor lifestyle, to one that is more safe for our feathered and furry friends.

To read more about the Cats Indoors!, please see our website: www.burroughs.org, or go to the campaign home page at: www.abcbirds.org/cats and see what you can do to help out. My family has three cats and they always stay indoors except when one makes a short dash for the outdoors. **Ed McCullough President-Burroughs**

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SQUAW CREEK NEWS!

The dedication of the new auditorium on March 14th was a great success with Senator Kit Bond, Nita Fuller, Region 3 Refuge Chief and Anita Gorman of the Missouri Department of Conservation cutting the ribbon. On March 15th, the Centennial of the Refuge System, a great program was presented. In addition, the Postmistress of the Mound City post office was on hand to sell the new Pelican Island stamp and to cancel stamps with the 2nd day cancellation.

Second day covers were passed out to all visitors. At 2:00 P.M. the time Capsule was loaded with documents. During the morning, Centennial banners

were placed on all the light poles in Mound City, on the main street. A contest at the Mound City elementary school, where students had painted posters, was judged and the winners were allowed to put their winning posters in the time capsule. Friends of Squaw Creek furnished a membership list with other documents to be placed in the capsule, which was temporarily sealed.

The auditorium was not complete but we were able to put about 50 of the new seats in the auditorium. Subsequently, a rain fell and the auditorium had some damage to ceiling tiles but they have been replaced. The new steel roof is now in place and the doors have

been installed, however, the hardware for the exterior doors is delayed. The general contractor indicates he will be finished completely on April 25th and all are encouraged to visit the new facility. Bid forms for the staff and visitor parking expansion and blacktopping of the road from the highway to the viewing tower have been released and this work is to commence the first week of May, to be completed by Eagle Days this December. Water conditions are satisfactory due to the small recent rain and shore birds are arriving. Good birding to all.

George Scheil,
Raytown, MO



REPORT FOR MARCH 15TH FIELD TRIP TO WATKINS MILL STATE PARK:

On a near-perfect spring day, 18 participants explored Watkins Mill State Park on March 15. Warm weather, clear skies, and a brisk south wind probably kept migrants on the move and contributed to a slow birding day. Ducks and geese on the lake were nearly absent, with only a small flock of scaup being spotted late in the morning. In the sky, however, numerous flocks of Snow Geese (with one possible Ross's Goose being picked out), Canada Geese, and Common Goldeneye were seen blowing north. Killdeer were heard throughout the day migrating overhead. A small flock of Ring-billed Gulls were fishing the lake. The expected resident passerines were found in small numbers, with many males—including Northern Cardinal, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, and Carolina Wren—serenading the group. A small flock of sparrows, including Song, American Tree, and White-throated, were seen bathing in and feeding near the lake. In all, 32 species were seen.

Kristi Mayo

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, June 1: Parkville Nature Sanctuary and English Landing Park in Parkville, MO with Elizabeth Kohler. Meet at 8 AM in the parking lot of the nature sanctuary (this is on the east side of Hwy 9 just north of downtown Parkville, behind the Parkville City Hall and next door to the Park University running track) for this for this half-day trip. Long pants and tick repellent are a **MUST** in this area! We will be walking 1-3 miles with one short stretch of moderately strenuous trail. Potential species include kingbirds, orioles, tanagers, flycatchers, bluebirds and hummingbirds. Trip will be followed by lunch in Parkville or Riverside if participants wish. For further information or directions, call Elizabeth Kohler at (816)353-1784 or email (lizkvet@yahoo.com).

Saturday, June 7: Cass County with Larry Rizzo, Joe Alburty and Mike Stoakes. 8:30 to 11:30 AM. Mini-BioBlitz at David & Kathy Winn's property near Drexel, Mo. Come help inventory the flora and fauna in this small, mostly untouched prairie known to contain many wildflowers, including Mead's Milkweed. No experience is necessary, as this will be an opportunity for novices to learn more about prairie flora and fauna. As good stewards of their unique property, the Winns are enthusiastic to learn more about the species here and are welcoming of our group to help in that effort. Meet at 8 AM at the McDonald's at 71 and 58 Hi ways in Belton, MO to carpool to the Cass County location. Joe Alburty and Mike Stoakes will lead the bird survey, while Larry Rizzo of the Missouri Department of Conservation will lead the wildflower and mammal surveys. Enthusiasts of other fauna (herps and insects) are welcome to attend and lend their expertise. Bring lunch, sun and tick/chigger protection. Afterwards, those with extra time may wish visit another local prairie restoration effort known as Tickwood Ranch. Please call Joe Alburty (913) 722-1597 or Mike Stoakes (913) 341-8147 if you have any questions about this working field trip.



Saturday and Sunday, June 21-22: Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira NWR near Great Bend, KS with Ed McCullough (816-505-2840). We'll bird these areas Saturday and early Sunday looking for nesting species, including avocets, plovers, rails, other shorebirds, Mississippi Kites, owls (including Burrowing, Screech and Barn) and more. Last year this field trip netted over 100 species of birds. Participants will be on their own to travel to Great Bend on Friday and acquire lodging. The field trip group will meet at 7:30am on Saturday and Sunday in the lobby of the Holiday Inn (3017 W. 10th; Phone 620-792-2431) and depart from there. Saturday's field trip will last all day. Sunday's field trip will last until early afternoon, with participants able to leave at any time to get a start back to the KC area. Bring a sack lunch, drinks, bug spray, radios, appropriate clothing, binoculars and a spotting scope if you have one. As RSVP to Ed McCullough would be appreciated, so he can have adequate resources available and share car-pooling information.

Martha LaFite Thompson Nature Sanctuary.

On May 11 there will be a Spring Migrant Bird Hike at 7 a.m. We will be listening for warblers, cuckoos, orioles, indigo buntings and more. The hike is for adults only and is free. Please call 816-781-8598 for information about this activity and other upcoming events.

Saturday Morning Bird Walks offered by the two Wild Bird Centers:

Noland Road Store: 4480 S. Noland Road, Noland South Shopping Center, Independence, MO (816-478-9399). Saturday Morning Bird Walks: Contact April 5, 12, 19 and 26; May 3, 10, 17. Destination to be determined the morning of the walk. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them. Meet at the store at 7:30 a.m., bird for 2-1/2 or 3 hours, then return to the store.

Corinth Square Store: 4046 W. 83rd, Prairie Village, KS (913-381-5633 or 913-648-8437). Saturday Morning Bird Walks: 3rd Saturday in April and 1st and 3rd Saturdays in May. Meet at the store at 8:00 a.m.

Audubon field trip participants usually carpool; riders chip in for gas. Cars leave at the stated departure time. From beginning birders to experts, all are welcome! All-day trips include restroom stops. If you have doubts about whether a field trip is "on" because of inclement weather, call the trip leader up to one hour before scheduled departure. The trip leader can also provide additional details on the trip. To list a trip, contact Jim or

**REPORT FOR MARCH 1ST FIELD TRIP TO MARAIS DES CYGNE WA:**

Twenty birders, including four intrepid ladies from Columbia, MO (Jean Leonatti, Bonnie Heidi, et. al.), braved chilly weather and snow squalls on our field trip to La Cygne Wildlife Area and Marais des Cygne Wildlife Area in Miami and Linn Counties on the KS side of the line. Birds were spotty, but a respectable count of 52 species were recorded over the course of five hours of birding. Highlights included a very nice male Red-breasted Merganser on La Cygne Lake, Great-tailed Grackles in a cattle pen near La Cygne Wildlife Area, and Pileated Woodpecker, Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser and a very cooperative Swamp Sparrow near the Marais des Cygne River. The group looked, and listened, intently for early arriving Eastern Phoebes, but none were found this day.

Mike Stoakes

JOIN THE BIRD-A-THON! Auduboners who don't get out to bird as much as you'd like, here's your chance to bird during the peak of spring migration AND help raise funds to support your organization. Burroughs Bird-A-Thon 2003 will be a month-long event this year, during the high migrant traffic month of May. Some folks may wish to do the traditional 14-20 hour, traveling 'Big Day', while others may chose a lower energy strategy by counting species seen in their yard, or at their bird feeder, throughout the month. However you chose to get your bird species in May, you still may only count a species ONCE. So, start thinking now about who you know who might be generous enough to make a per species pledge or lump sum donation to help further Burroughs mission. For more information about how to form a team, or to find out how to join a team, contact one of the following: Mike Stoakes (913) 341-8147, Mark Land (913) 381-4324 or Ed McCullough (816) 505-2840.

BURROUGHS AUDUBON BIRD-A-THON 2003 PLEDGE FORM

Thank you for your generous support of Burroughs Audubon through your pledge to the Bird-A-Thon 2003 fundraiser. Your pledge will help preserve the rich natural heritage of our community by helping Burroughs fund local conservation projects which provide much needed habitat for birds, native plants, and wildlife. Our active involvement with organizations such as KC Wildlands, as well as our public outreach through birding field trips, aims to promote local conservation efforts while shaping opinion and debate about the importance of ecosystem preservation. We also use these funds to help KU Ornithology students with their ongoing research into bird habitat and population studies in South America. Our funding helps fully fund at least one student's trip each year, and we'd like to continue to grow that support. Remember that many of our birds are only here a few months each year, and spend more of the year on other continents than our own. You can support the Bird-a-thon by either participating (see above) or by pledging some money in support.

----- copy or cut out-----

Your Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Your Pledge (per species found by the teams or flat amount):** _____ **Our teams should locate**

around 200 species of birds, so you may want to pledge per species (such as \$0.10, \$0.20, \$0.50 or more per species) or a flat rate (\$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, etc). You can also make a pledge by calling Mike, Mark or Ed and pledge towards any team. Send your pledge to: Mark Land, 8447 Lamar, Overland Park, KS 66208





Our Condolences

The Burroughs Audubon Society sends its sympathy to the family of the late Kevin Aaron, son of Arnold and Sami Aaron, nephew of Joli Winer and Cecil Sweeney. Donations may be made to the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve PO Box 585 Cottonwood Falls, Kansas 66845.

Singles Luncheon

SUNDAYS AT 12:30

May 25

McCoy's

4057 Pennsylvania (Westport)

June 22

Canyon Cafe

4626 Broadway (Plaza)

For further information, contact
Doris Cobb, 816-331-1119

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746-1113



How to become a Burroughs member:

Please use the following form for **NEW** membership:

(If you are renewing, please use the form from National Audubon)

APPLICATION FOR NEW MEMBERSHIP OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Please check the annual membership category you desire:

____ New Membership/\$20.

____ Senior Citizen/\$15

____ Contributing/\$250

____ Individual/\$35

____ Sr. Citizen Family/\$23

____ Donor/\$500

____ Family/\$38

____ Sustaining/\$50

____ Life/\$1,500

____ Student/\$15

____ Supporting/\$100

____ CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City,State,Zip: _____

Make check payable to NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail to Heidi McCullough, 5915 NW Caney Creek Drive, Kansas City, MO 64151. Questions? Call 816-505-2840. Moving? Fill out this form with new address, check CHANGE OF ADDRESS above and mail to Heidi McCullough. National Audubon/Burroughs Audubon Application for joint membership. You can also email Heidi for more information: heidi@mcculloughweb.com

2003 Burroughs Annual Dinner Highlights!

Over 80 people joined at Adams Mark on April 12th for the 2003 Burroughs Annual Dinner and Silent Auction. Dr. Paul Johnsgard gave an informative and inspiring speech about our Prairies.

Last year's Esther O'Connor recipient, Matt Gearheart presented Doris Cobb with the 2003 Esther O'Connor Award, which is an award presented yearly. The award is named after Esther, who donated the land that the Discovery Center is now on. Congratulations, Doris!

The auction was a great success, raising almost \$2,000 for local conservation projects and other Burroughs efforts. Many thanks to the donors and to all of the bidders!

Roger McNeill also announced the 2002 list of Top Ten Birds for the Burroughs area (approx 100 mile radius). You can view this list on the Burroughs website at www.burroughs.org.

THANK YOU TO OUR SILENT AUCTION DONORS

Corporate Donors:

Backyard Bird Center - 6232 NW Barry Road, Kansas City
 (The) Fine Arts Theatre Group - 5909 Johnson Drive, Mission
 (The) Great Frame Up - 8218 Metcalf, Overland Park
 Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, Lenexa
 Kansas Speedway - 400 Speedway Blvd., KCK
 Mid-Continent Agrimarketing - 1465 N. Winchester, Olathe
 Moss Copy Center - 5406 Johnson Drive, Mission
 Nature's Niche - Space 2090 Independence Center, Indep.
 Neal Harris Heating, Air Conditioning & Plumbing - Kansas City
 Off The Cuff Designs-24406 E. Timberlake Tr., Lee's Summit
 Plaza Ford - Ideal Laundry & Dry Cleaners - Kansas City
 Quality Hill Playhouse - 303 W. 10th Street, Kansas City
 Schmitt Music Organ Center - 79th & Quivira, Lenexa
 Wild Bird Center - 4480 S. Noland Rd., Independence
 Wild Bird Center - 4046 W. 83rd St., Prairie Village
 Wild Bird House - 7342 W. 80th St., Overland Park

Individual Donors:

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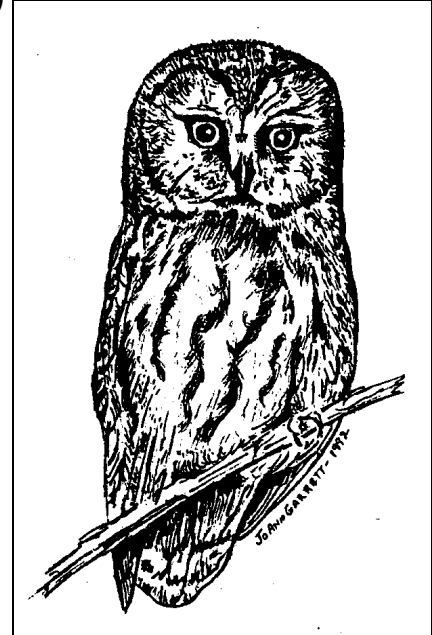
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Fleming Park, Lake Jacomo
 (from Hwy 291 take Exit 12 and
 go 2 miles East on Woods
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 day and Saturday.

12:30-4:30 816-795-8177

Bird Profile—Northern Saw-Whet Owl by Joanne Garrett (Species-*Aegolius Acadicus*/Family-Strigidae)

The name saw-whet derived from one of its owl sounds which is much like a saw being sharpened with a file. It is heard only during the breeding season to attract a mate and establish territory. In January, 2003 this owl was observed around Baring, MO, which is east of Kirksville off highway 11. This 8" (smaller than a screech owl) owl has yellow eyes, cinnamon-brown with white and buff spotted upper parts, white with dark brown and reddish streaks and blotched under parts. The juvenile has tawny-cinnamon under parts and chocolate-brown heavily spotted with buffy-white upper parts, with a distinct white Y from beak to eyebrows.



My first observation of the Saw-whet owl was on January 20, 1973, at Squaw Creek NWR, thanks to Harry Gregory. It was in a small cedar close the path leading from the parking lot up the hill to where the trailer is now.

A favorite memory also in the 1970's was an owl in a pine tree at the triangle at Lake Jacomo, found by Chris Hobbs. During the day this tame, beautiful little show-stopper sat very quietly not moving a feather but watching with its big yellow eyes. This crepuscular hunter of forests feeds on beetles, rodents and small birds, such as the goldfinch—evident by the yellow feathers under the roost. The prey is swallowed whole and pellets formed in 8 to 16 hours from the compressed bones, fur and exoskeleton leftovers after the nutrients and absorbed by the owl.

It was truly a learning experience to be able to observe up close the facial disc much like a sunburst of tiny brownish feathers streaking away from the yellow eyes. Their flight is usually low and direct, similar to the woodcock. The migratory factors include temperature, snow conditions and food supply.

wingbeat is a bimonthly publication of the Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City. BAS has over 2500 members in the Kansas City area who share an interest in birding and our natural heritage and wish to preserve and enhance it for future generations. Our members share and promote this interest through a variety of activities that are open to the public.



Kansas City WildLand's Second Annual BioBlitz

Kansas City WildLands (KCWL) will conduct its Second Annual BioBlitz in remnant prairie and woodlands at Powell Gardens in Kingsville, MO from 3 pm on June 13th until 3 pm on June 14th. Following on the success of last year's bioblitz at Swope Park, for 24 hours, biologists and naturalists from all over the region will survey the Powell Garden prairie and woodlands for all forms of plant and animal life: birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, insects, spiders, fungi, grasses, forbs, trees, and shrubs.

On Saturday from 11 am to 2 pm, the public are invited to come see what the scientists have discovered at the KCWL Bioblitz Education and Outreach event at the Powell Gardens visitor's center. There will be demonstrations and displays of the life found on the Bioblitz, native plants to purchase, and guided hikes to see the wild life of Powell Gardens first-hand. Bring your family along to discover all about life in your own backyard. You'll be amazed! If you would like to join this year's Bioblitz, we need scientists and naturalists from all disciplines to conduct surveys, and other volunteers to assist the scientists and handle logistics. For more information or to volunteer, contact Linda Lehrbaum, KCWildLands Coordinator, at 816/561-1061 X116 or email Linda@bridgingthegap.org. Powell Gardens is located on Hwy 50, about 20 miles east of Lee's Summit, MO. www.powellgardens.org

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