



Burroughs

Audubon

Greater Kansas City Chapter of the National Audubon Society



Harris Sparrow Photo
Courtesy of Linda Williams

www.burroughs.org

WingBeat

Volume 60, No. 2
Summer 2008

WingBeat is a publication of the Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City, a non-profit membership organization in the Kansas City area whose members share an interest in birding and preserving our natural heritage for future generations. Its members promote this interest through a variety of activities that are open to the public. Your participation makes Burroughs Audubon an effective, dynamic voice and center for birding and conservation in the Kansas City region.

Summer Field Trips

Saturday, July 12th, 2008 ~ 1:30 PM

The Konza Prairie south of Manhattan, Kansas by way of the scenic Skyline Drive along the Flint Hills

Brett Sandercock, Assoc. Professor of Biology – KSU

Meeting place: Commuter parking lot at I70 & K7, west of the Kansas Speedway

This trip will start with the scenic drive along the Flint Hills. Upland Sandpipers, Common Nighthawks, and other prairie species are sure to be encountered. As early evening cools off, we'll walk the Konza Prairie just south of Manhattan, KS and learn more about this prairie ecosystem. There will be an optional dinner stop afterwards, but please bring snacks, water, and insect repellent. If you plan on joining us, it is important to contact Pat St. John (913) 706-5569 or pstjohn@kumc.edu.

Saturday, August 2nd, 2008 ~ 9:00 AM

Powell Gardens Annual North American Butterfly Count with Alan Branhagen

Meeting Place: Visitor's Center – Powell Gardens

There will be a \$3 count fee. Mention that you are with the BAS, and the entrance fee will be waived. This is a 3.25 mile nature walk for all levels of ability. Please be sure to bring plenty of water and a hat. Reservations are required no later than July 30th. Contact Alan Branhagen at (816) 697-2600, ext. 241

General Meetings

1st Thursday of each month
September through June
(Annual Dinner in April)

6:30 PM ~ Coffee and Conversation
7:00 PM ~ Meeting and Special Events

Anita Gorman Conservation
Discovery Center
4750 Troost Avenue ~ Kansas City

BurroughsAnnounce

BurroughsAnnounce is a group email list for timely announcements and information between your *WingBeat* newsletters. To receive email notices of postings to this website (including field trips and events), send an email with the word "subscribe" in the subject line to:

BurroughsAnnounce-owner@yahoo.com.
You will then receive an email with instructions.

It's very easy to use and user friendly!

Board Meetings

3rd Thursday of each month
7:00 PM

Anita Gorman Conservation
Discovery Center
4750 Troost Avenue ~ Kansas City

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A Note About The Art of Giving

from Christine Kline

Burroughs Audubon promotes the appreciation of birds, the enjoyment of nature, natural history education, and the conservation of habitat. When you give, you open countless opportunities for adults and children who want to learn, interact, and help conserve birds, wildlife, and their habitats. Offering these "healing" experiences can take you out of yourself, opening a broader understanding of those gifts that bless us every day. You can support our endeavors to offer these rich experiences to more and more people by giving to the Burroughs Audubon Society. All of us who serve on the Board of Directors and all who volunteer in countless other ways experience a burst of joy when we see this world opened to others, especially children. As Chair of the new fundraising committee, I will be seeking new ways to expand membership and raise funds so that we can achieve our goal to bless more and more people with the rich and varied Audubon experience.

The Art of Giving

To give means to volunteer something that does not require anything in return.

However, the beauty of giving to the Burroughs Audubon Society is that you do receive so much in return. The Burroughs Audubon offers individuals and families opportunity that is free to everyone including field trips, bird walks, special speakers, and the chance to take part in the education and conservation of our local habitat from the Kansas City Wildlands and Wetlands to its Habitats and Sanctuaries. No matter how you choose to give, your gift will go to preserving birds, other wildlife, and their habitat – both locally and internationally!

There are many ways to give and donations are fully tax deductible.
Burroughs Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) organization.



Give a One Time Gift by sending a check

Give by becoming an Audubon Advocate who makes a donation on a monthly basis (\$10 Minimum)

This reliable funding gives us the resources it needs to work on the most pressing issues as they arise.

Give a Living Tribute in memory of a loved one or to honor a special someone

Give by Becoming a Member of the National Audubon Society

For Stock Gifts or Workplace Giving visit www.audubon.org and click on "Give Now".

Inside Burroughs Audubon

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Open

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NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Email Address _____ May we contact you by email? Yes No

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Country _____

USA: 1 Yr \$20 Canada: 1 Yr \$45 International: 1 Yr \$50 Change of Address

Make checks payable to National Audubon Society

Please Memo: Burroughs Audubon Society N-02 7XCH

Mail to: Membership Data Center, PO Box 52504, Boulder, CO 80323-2504

Questions? Call (816) 554-1956

Moving? Enter new address and check "Change of Address" and mail to your MDC.

Your membership to Audubon is deductible except for the \$15 fair market value of Audubon Magazine
Please allow 4-6 weeks for the arrival of your first issue of Audubon magazine.



From the President's Nest

by Jill DeWitt

Thanks to all who participated in Birdathon and Annual Dinner and Auction. We held our first native plant sale the last two Saturdays of April. The sale included a fine selection of plants that have adapted to challenging Midwestern soils and weather conditions. We welcome your photos of bird gardens, prairie plantings and rain gardens

Karen Stair and volunteers from Master Naturalists are working on the second phase of planting a butterfly and insect garden at Burroughs Audubon Nature Center and Library in Fleming Park. Alan Branhagen, Chief Horticulturist of Powell Gardens, has designed the garden. These native plants support biodiversity – their roots sink deep into the earth, sequestering carbon dioxide and cooling the earth.

Brad Jacobs led the Missouri chapter leaders on our first trip to La Ceiba, Honduras for our international partnership. We met with teachers, conservation leaders and potential partners. We hiked in the unique very dry forests, visited the Emerald Hummingbird Sanctuary and enjoyed birding in the exquisite cloud forests of Pico Bonito Park. The hospitality of the Honduran people is beyond comparison. I hope some of you will consider joining us next year.

We've received some scrapbooks with past chapter history. Please contact me if you'd like to archive or copy them. It would be great to have copies available electronically before possibly sending them to the Western Missouri Historical Manuscripts Collection or the Kansas City Public Library for public access.

Welcome to the Board!

At the General Meeting on May 15, 2008, four new Board Members were welcomed into the Board of Directors of the Burroughs Audubon Society. We are very pleased to have them on board and welcome their input and ideas as we strive towards new goals as we promote the appreciation of birds, the enjoyment of nature, natural history, education & the conservation of habitat.

Christine Kline, Secretary

Christine has only been birding since 1993 when her in-laws gave her a bird book and a feeder for her birthday. They now realize this was a BIG mistake as she gasps and screams from the backseat on trips to "STOP THE CAR!" She loves bird watching and is working towards recording each bird she sees with an actual photograph. This drives her family insane. Her favorite sanctuary is the Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge and her favorite bird is the Indigo Blue Bunting – something she waited 14 years to see. Christine works as a Recruiter from her home office in Pleasant Hill, Missouri. When we learned that her average day at the office involved making over 50 cold calls a day, we were very excited that she volunteered to create and head up a Fundraising Committee. Additionally, she will serve as Secretary of the Burroughs Audubon Society and Managing Editor of the Newsletter.

Karen Smith, Board of Directors

Karen Smith has sponsored high-achieving Science Olympiad and Science Knowledge Bowl teams as she taught Biology in the Shawnee Mission School District for 40 years! She has been a part of many science oriented activities such as organizing the Science Knowledge Bowl, writer for the InterACTION Newsletter, and organizer for the Avila Women's Science and Technology Event for high school girls. Karen even does her own nature journaling as well! We are excited to have her as a member on our Board of Directors so that we can integrate her science knowledge into our appreciation and conservation of birds and their habitats.

Michael O'Keefe, Board of Directors

Mike has been a birder since the mid 1990s when he received a bird feeder for a present. Over time, one feeder led to another, to a book, then binoculars...well, you get the picture. Mike works full-time for KMOS-TV, a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) station that serves central Missouri which is licensed to the University of Central Missouri. Mike is pursuing graduate studies in environmental science, and his interest in birds led him to join the volunteer naturalists of Burr Oak Woods Conservation in 2000. Mike joined the Missouri Bluebird Society, founded in 2006 by several residents of Jefferson City, and he is helping them organize their 3rd annual MOBS Conference in Independence, Missouri on September 13, 2008 (more details at www.missouribluebird.org). Mike's favorite bird is the last life bird he saw – the Costa's Hummingbird. But he always looks forward to the return of the Scissor Tail Flycatchers, more of which he sees each year.

Shari Harden, Board of Directors

Shari began birding in 1991 as a graduate student at Utah State University. While the Cache Valley of Utah is a fantastic place to become a bird watcher, so is a hawk trapping blind in Cape May, NJ. She went east to do research for two fall seasons as she worked on completing a Master's degree in biology. Shari has worked as a biology instructor at Blue River Community College for 14 years, and she volunteered for the Missouri Department of Conservation for 11 years. Her latest birding highlight was being selected to help with a research project in the Galapagos Islands for four weeks during the summer of 2006. She also volunteers at triathlon clinics to help introduce women of all ages to the sport. Shari says "The better your cardiovascular fitness level, the more stamina you will have to do more birding!"

Welcome to Burroughs!



Nugent, Marydee P.

Marydee Nugent, 81, of Overland Park, Kansas passed away April 21, 2008. Dee was born on October 21, 1926 in Newark, Ohio. The Burroughs Audubon sincerely thanks Dee's family for their contribution as a living tribute to her memory. Please accept our sympathies.

BURROUGHS EVENTS

Bird Whisperers Identify

Most Birds in Birdathon!

by Paul Habiger



Birdathon took place from May 9th through May 18th. Teams engaged in a bit of friendly competition to see how many species they could identify within a 24-hour period while raising money to fund Burroughs' important conservation work.

And the results are final. With 162 species, the BIRD WHISPERERS, with leader Matt Gearheart and member Mark Land, won the friendly competition by identifying the most bird species in the Burroughs Birdathon. The results for the other teams were: ROADRUNNERS – 144 species – Leader Mike Stoakes and members Paul Habiger, Alan Myers, Nic Allen and Gary Johnson; GIRLIE BIRDERS – 122 species – Leader Linda Williams and members Susan Rohrmeier, Becky Selzer, Sara Scheil, and Laura Robinson; NORTHLANDERS – 110 species – Leader Mark McKellar and Members John Burwell, Rick Jordahl and Ruth Simmons; WAXWING WARRIORS – 101 species – Leader Pat St. John and members Shari Harden, Sherry Leonardo, Karen Stair and Cindy & Dave Duckworth.

Altogether, the teams identified a remarkable 197 different species. All the teams reported that they had a great time birding and faced some challenging weather and other situations at times. In later issues of the newsletters we will share some of their stories.

The Birdathon was a very successful fund raiser. Teams raised more than \$2800 and are still accepting donations. Donations are being used to help Burroughs support local and international conservation projects. Thanks to all for your generous support of Burroughs Audubon. Look for more stories and updates in the Fall Newsletter.

Annual Dinner & Auction

On April 5, 2008 Burroughs Audubon held their Annual Dinner and Silent Auction where David Seibel, Educator, Photographer, and Ornithologist, presented "Confessions of a Bird Paparazzo." Below is the list of donors for this event. We appreciate their generous donations!

Don & Mary Arney

Betsy Betros

Alan Branhagen

Jill DeWitt

Anne Duffer

David Earls

Bob Fleuchel

Dennis Friedrich

Joann Garrett

Matt Gearheart

Janet Gerken

Paul & Sue Habiger

Shari Harden

Larry Kohler

Stephen & Marilyn Koshland

Laurie Kosmiski

Sherry Leonardo

Mark McKellar

David & Kiki Norwood

Matt Nowak

Linda Ochs

Pat St. John

Terry & Karen Stair

Mike & Elizabeth Stoakes

Terry & Karen Swope

Marlys Wagner

Lisa Weeks

Jim Wells

Linda Williams

Rodney & Priscilla Wilson

Charles Wurrey

Jim & Ellen Zellmer

American Heartland Theatre

Backyard Bird Center

Wild Bird Center – Corinth Square

Wild Bird Center – Independence

State of the Birds

The Watchlist

At the National Audubon's Website, you can go to "Birds and Science" and click on "State of the Birds" for a current Watchlist. During the Birdathon, Seventeen of the species identified were on the National Audubon's Watchlist.

Four of the species are on the red list because they are declining rapidly and/or have very small populations or limited ranges, and face major conservation threats. Fourteen of the species are on the yellow list because they are either declining or are rare.

All birds listed on the Watchlist are typically species of national conservation concern.

So, embrace Citizen Science! It's a fun way to connect with the natural world that generates vital information for the conservation of birds.

New Address Same Location

The Burroughs Audubon's Nature Center and Bird Sanctuary has a new address, but the location and the wonderful things it has to offer have not changed. So stop in and spend the afternoon checking out bird books, watching birds in the viewing room, and purchasing seed.

Burroughs Nature Center & Bird Sanctuary

Anne Duffer, Manager

7300 SW Park Road – Blue Springs

(816) 795-8177

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

12:30 PM to 4:30 PM

Directions: From I470/Highway 291, exit at Woods Chapel Road (Exit #12) and head east for two miles. At the Fleming Park sign, turn south onto SW Park Road. The library's entrance is the gravel road on the right side.



First native plant sale draws in visitors

International Partners Meet for a Tropical Getaway

by Kelly Gillespie

Tropical Getaway was hosted by the Burroughs Audubon International Conservation Committee. Guests came from Jefferson City, Missouri, Honduras, Central America, and Virginia to combine efforts to expand the size of Pico Bonito National Park in Honduras, Central America.

More than \$2K was raised so that we can learn more about how we can save the tropics and preserve the habitat where migratory songbirds travel for the winter. Guests included Dr. David Wiedenfeld, Assistant Director of International Programs for American Bird Conservancy, Ricardo “Fito” Steiner of Honduras, Director of Pico Bonito National Park, and Brad Jacobs, Chief Biologist and Ornithologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation from Jefferson City. These presenters discussed the efforts that are being made with other partners to acquire critical habitat in the Pico Bonito National Park as well as the neighboring Honduran Emerald Refuge which is named for the Honduran Emerald Hummingbird. These efforts include improving the habitat by planting and restoring native plants. We were privileged to also have Randy Wisthoff, Director of the Kansas City Zoo and Anita Gorman, a well-respected community leader who has won recognition for her contributions to the cause of conservation. Please accept our sincere gratitude for all your support!

18 Binoculars and a Party for the Planet

Because of a generous grant from the John C. Griswold Foundation, the Burroughs Audubon recently purchased 18 pairs of binoculars through the Wild Bird Center. The binoculars allow each child to have a hands-on learning experience and connect with nature at the Kansas City Zoo’s Party for the Planet (page 8) and at the Rotary Ecology Day. These have also been used for Migratory Bird Day at Burroughs Nature Center and for Senior Day at the Zoo. Three pairs will be available at the Bird Sanctuary for guest usage while the remaining pairs will be held for special outreach programs. This grant also allowed for landscaping, signage, and a Chimney Swift Tower at the Burroughs Audubon Nature Center and Bird Sanctuary as well as many other allocations that will benefit the Burroughs Audubon Society, both locally and internationally. The Burroughs Audubon expresses its gratitude to the Chisholm Family!

TogetherGreen

The National Audubon Society received a \$20 million Toyota grant—the largest Audubon has received in its 103-year history! Go to www.togethergreen.org to learn more and contact Jill DeWitt at jdewitt@audubon.org to see how you can help!

Northern Mockingbird

Mimus Polyglotta ~ “Many Tongued Mimic”

by Joann Garrett

The Northern Mockingbird is the State Bird of Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas. The Mockingbird is the most conspicuous of the 30 Members of the Strictly New World Mimidae (Family: *Mockingbirds and Thrashers*). This 10” non-migratory bird inhabits rural thickets and woodland edges but is more likely to be seen near human habitation in both towns and suburbs. When doing breeding bird surveys, I usually found a Mockingbird in the cemetery whether in town or in the country.

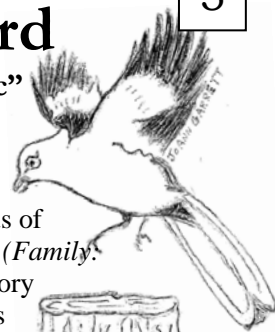
The plumage of the adult male and female is identical. They have a trim body and thin bill with a dull gray color above with white below and a long blackish tail. Their feathers are white on the outer tail and have blackish wings with white patches. Their eyes are pale yellow.

Many remarkable feats of this indefatigable singer’s mimicry have been recorded. Alexander Sprout Jr., from *Bent’s Life Histories of North American Birds* once said, “One of the most famous of all was said to imitate 39 birds’ songs and 50 bird calls, plus the notes of a frog and a cricket.” The song of the Mockingbird resounds from coast to coast. This mimic repeats each theme rapidly a half dozen times or more day or night. No other member of the Mimidae repeats a phrase so often. Much of its repertoire is just pure Mockingbird. Its plagiaristic song consists of bits and pieces taken from the repertoires of other birds as well as the barks of a dog, the meows of a cat, the croaks of a frog, and squeaky doors! An Indian tale gives the Mockingbird credit for teaching other birds to sing, so they are the plagiarists. Mockingbirds are vocal all year around but much subdued during cold weather. They are silent in August when they molt.

The Mockingbird plows through the air with wing beats that compare to the rowing of a boat. Since their breeding range has expanded to Canada, many migrate southward. However, most Mockingbirds remain near their breeding territories year round.

The male Mockingbird usually builds the nest’s foundation in a tree, shrub, or vine up within ten feet of the ground. The female then lines the mass of thorny sticks with plant stems, grasses, and rootlets. The Gray Catbird nest is almost identical in appearance, site, and size. There are usually four blue-green eggs with brown spots incubated by the female for about 12 days. They are born altricial (*or incapable of moving around on their own soon after hatching*). They fledge in 11-13 days and are fed by both parents until the female re-nests – then just the male feeds. Most nesting failures are from predation such as snakes, hawks, Blue Jays, American Crows, raccoons, opossums, and domestic cats. The Mockingbird nests are rarely parasitized by the Brown Headed Cowbird. Mockingbirds have been known to live for 12 years in the wild.

An interesting idea expressed by birdsong analyst Charles Hartshorne is that each Mockingbird’s song, in a sense, is an autobiography – a record of the sounds the bird has been exposed to. So when you are birding, “listen” to the Mockingbird and perhaps you can detect which birds it’s been hanging around with. For some of us, Harper Lee’s 1960 novel, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, comes to mind when we have been deprived of sleep by the persistent repetition of the singing mockingbird far into the night and perhaps the wee hours of the morning. Well, as known by all, this is a “no-no.” So be happy to hear the Mockingbird serenade you and use ear plugs to catch your ZzzzzzS.



BIRDS and SCIENCE

Audubon's Science Team focuses on involving people to find solutions to the challenges faced by birds in the modern world. Why not take part in one of our Citizen Science activities? Citizen Science is a way for you to connect with the natural world through fun activities that generate vital information for the conservation of birds. We have activities to suit people of all levels of experience, expertise, and available time. Go to www.burroughs.org to view upcoming events or click on "Contact Us".

Field Trip Records

93 Species *by David Williams*

Twenty participants at the Burroughs Audubon Society sponsored field trip to Fort Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas recorded a nice total of 93 species – Not bad when there is only one shorebird and one duck represented on the list!

Not everyone saw every bird, but everyone had terrific looks at many of the songbirds of the big oaks, the marshy bottoms and the brushy edges. Many thanks to my Kansas City birding friends who helped to find all of these birds and helped to get everyone some looks. Even though no Ceruleans were recorded this day, below are some group highlights:

- 17 species of warblers included the Tennessee, North Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-Sided, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Yellow-throated, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, American Redstart, Prothonotary, Ovenbird, Louisiana Water Thrush, Kentucky, Mourning, Common Yellowthroat, and finally the Yellow-breasted Chat.
- 5 vireos were recorded including the White-eyed Vireo, Bell's Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, and the Red-eyed Vireo.
- At least 6 Scarlet Tanagers were seen – Some in brilliant, lingering looks, some bathing, males and females. The Summer Tanager was common but less vocal than the previous weeks.

Additional birds recorded were the Cooper's Hawk and the Broad-winged Hawk both briefly as they flew overhead. The Yellow Bellied Cuckoo was many in count but by distant voice only and the first I've heard this year. The Yellow-Throated, Acadian, Alder, and Least Empids were recorded along with a Cedar Waxwing.

A follow-up trip took us to Weston Bend State Park in Missouri with Warblers as the target. Many of these were seen at the overlook area and parking lot. 18 species of warblers were seen including at least 6 Blackpolls, the Hooded, the Blue-Winged, the Chestnut-Sided, a stunning Blackburnian male in the sun, a Yellow-throated, the Mourning, and finally, a Yellow-breasted Chat with a distant voice.

Insane Birding?!

by Nic Allen

There I was enjoying a great whirlwind birding trip of Kansas with my good friend Matt Gearheart when all of a sudden he brought out a mysterious three ring binder. My interest peaked, and not able to mind my own business (which my wife now regrets), I asked what it was. His answer opened up a whole new level of birding to me called County Listing. In short, county listing is the process of keeping a life list for every county in the state. When you get 75 birds in a county, you become listable in the state of Kansas, although some states require varying numbers of birds. Upon my return from that trip, I told my wife all about county listing, and she gave me a look that told me that she thought I was a little off my rocker. However, a short time later, I had my own notebook chalked full of bird lists for each of the 105 Kansas counties.

One could argue that my birding has now turned into insanity. However, I say that it is an amazing feeling to be birding in a new county and to find that 75th bird. County listing is also a great way to keep the birding drive alive and keep you getting out into the field. It will take you to new locations you might have never seen before. Additionally, it gives you a better understanding of bird distributions across the state. If you want to add a little competitive edge to birding, there is a website that lists everyone's statistics so you can see how you rank. If you are interested in County Listing in the state of Kansas, visit www.ksbirds.org where you can find everything you need to get started. You might just find that you are as insane about birding as the rest of us county listers. Good luck and good birding!

Birding Listserves

With the widespread acceptance and use of the internet, Burroughs Audubon no longer maintains a telephone hotline for Rare Bird Alerts. However, area birders can stay abreast of local, state, and regional bird sightings through many Listserves. Below are two sites for Missouri and Kansas. More links can be accessed at www.burroughs.org by clicking on "Listserves."

MISSOURI (The Audubon Society of Missouri)

Send an email with "SUBSCRIBE MOBIRDS-L" and your name in the subject line to listserv@po.missouri.edu.

KANSAS (The Kansas Ornithological Society)

Go to www.ksbirds.org, click on "Archives and Information" and then click on "Join or leave the list."



Audubon at Home ~ Take the Healthy Yard Pledge

With spring passing us by and summer at our back door, creating healthy habitats should be on every bird lover's mind. You can create a healthy yard and other space by planting native species, removing invasive plants, reducing pesticide use, conserving water, protecting water quality, and keeping birds safe. Your actions can help make a difference. Take the online pledge today and tell everyone you know to do the same! Go to www.audubon.org, click on Audubon at Home's home page and scroll down to Take our Healthy Yard Pledge.



ISSUES and ACTIONS

For over a century, Audubon has been a leading voice encouraging conservation of precious habitat and wildlife for future generations.

Missouri Seeks Habitat Through IBAs *by Paul Habiger*

A new IBA committee was formed and will be chaired by Paul Habiger, Board Member of the Burroughs Audubon Society. IBAs are Important Birding Areas – sites that provide essential habitat important to the survival of one or more bird species. Since 1995, Audubon has identified more than 2,100 state-level IBAs covering more than 220 million acres of habitat in 41 states. In Missouri, 47 IBAs have been identified, but there are no official IBA sites at this time. The Burroughs Audubon territory has been labeled as Eastern Tallgrass Prairie. If you would like to help Paul with his endeavors on this committee, please contact him at paulfhmailbox41-birds@yahoo.com.

Flying Cigars are the New Bluebird *by Nic Allen*

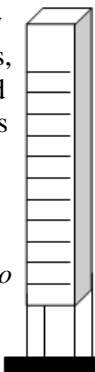
Nothing says summer like the twittering bug-catching cigar-shaped birds known as Chimney Swifts. Commonly found around schools and downtown areas, Chimney Swifts are migratory birds that live up to their namesake by roosting and nesting in chimneys. Unfortunately, their numbers are declining in part due to the recent change in the structure of chimneys. Chimneys are now made to be narrower and they have caps over the top of them which prohibit the Chimney Swifts from entering them. As Chimney Swifts migrate in the spring and fall, they need these vital structures for roosting.

During migration, large flocks of up to thousands of birds can be seen in tremendous aerial displays. Once nesting season arrives, only one or two pairs of Chimney Swifts will use a chimney depending on the size. Some people may envision the birds as building big grass and fluff-filled nests in their chimney, and they may see this as a fire hazard. This is where education of the public becomes important as these common misconceptions are not true. Instead, Chimney Swifts gather individual twigs and then start constructing their nest to the side of a chimney with saliva. They keep “gluing” on more and more twigs to build a small shelf to hold their eggs.

What can be done to help? Just like Bluebirds need help by putting up nest boxes, Chimney Swifts need our help too. We need to provide the Swifts with artificial uncapped chimneys. Chimney Swift towers are becoming more and more common. These structures provide the necessary habitat for Swifts without the hassle of being a real chimney. Instructions on how to build them are readily available on the internet. The towers can be freestanding or attached to a house to look like a chimney. Many nature centers such as Lakeside Nature Center and the Anita B. Gorman Conservation Center have Chimney Swift towers, which help control insect populations in these areas. To make these towers even more educational a camera can be added to show both school children and adults all the exciting activity that is occurring inside. In the future, you may see towers incorporated into more shopping centers as informational kiosks. Hopefully with a slight shift in thinking and a little help for these feathered friends, we will be welcoming Chimney Swifts for many summers to come.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Burroughs' Member Don Arney recently constructed a “chimney” in his backyard. Go to www.chimneyswifts.org and click on “tower construction” to learn how to construct one.*



Conservation Matters

by Jill DeWitt, President

June marked the emergence of the Climate Security Bill in the Missouri Senate, which would have been a serious start to addressing global warming at the federal level. But despite a substantial majority, the bill failed to garner the required 60 votes to pass. The current president vowed to veto the bill.

Comment periods for the South Metro Corridor have ended, but the planning continues for trails, the riverfront, and Important Bird Areas. So please contact us if you wish to be involved and join us for habitat restoration workdays with the KC Wildlands – explore and enjoy the metro area's existing pre-settlement landscapes. Workdays are posted at www.kcwildlands.org.

The Conservation Committee meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month throughout the year in the evening along with the International and Global Warming Committees. To learn more or to join our global warming committee, contact Nic Allen at tendingthegarden@sbcglobal.net. Contact us to be involved with trail planning, the riverfront, Important Bird Areas, population and habitat issues.

Many of our committees meet and are engaged with projects over the summer. If you'd like to become involved, please contact me or our committee chairs.



Jill DeWitt leads a team of clean energy advocates – students, business owners, and Audubon members to talk with legislators on Conservation Lobby Day.

Burroughs Audubon



Greater
Kansas City Chapter
of the
National Audubon
Society

A Letter from the Editor by Christine Kline

You've probably noticed that your Burroughs Audubon Newsletter has a new look. We've incorporated some new headings and even added a little color. We've continued to use recycled paper; the gray is now white. *WingBeat* has indeed, changed. We've kept some familiarity such as the Harris Sparrow. The knowledge, curiosity, and love for bird-life will also remain. From a personal standpoint, my bird watching has been restricted to the occasional drive through the country and feeders in my backyard. But after becoming Managing Editor of the newsletter and having the opportunity to research all the websites to create a new format, my eyes have been opened to a whole new world of bird watching I never knew existed! The opportunities to be involved, even from a scientific and conservation standpoint, are absolutely astounding! My hope is that you will share this newsletter with friends who are not yet members and that you will share your opinions regarding the new format. I welcome them!



& again for Rotary Ecology Day on April 23rd. Volunteers from Burroughs Audubon showed the kids how to use binoculars and find migratory songbirds among the Zoo's animal exhibits. Pictured above is Paul Habiger with some of the kids on April 19, 2008.

September 27, 2008



There are a variety of jobs that are vital to making this event a success. Anything you can do would be appreciated! Please contact Kelly Gillespie (816) 529-5858 or kellyg363@aol.com to find out how you can help.

Do you need a ride to a Meeting?
Visit www.burroughs.org and click on "Meetings"

We encourage our readers to share their opinions through letters to the editor. Please write to the Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City, Letter to the Editor, 7300 SW Park Road, Blue Springs, MO 64105 or email birdsecretary@comcast.net.

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