

Topeka

March 2007 Volume 60, Number 2
This newsletter is published monthly by Topeka Audubon Society

Audubon Society News

www.topekaaudubonsociety.org

See page 3 for registration for
the Annual Spring Dinner on April 10

“The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful-- Our Kansas River” by Laura Calwell

Tuesday, 7pm, March 13
**Topeka & Shawnee County
Public Library**

“Friends of the Kaw” is a not-for-profit, grassroots, environmental organization whose mission is to protect and preserve the Kansas River for present and future generations. Friends of the Kaw is a member of the international water protection organization, Waterkeeper Alliance, and has hired Laura Calwell as the Kansas Riverkeeper to be the eyes, ears and voice for the Kansas River. Laura is a non-governmental advocate and works in the capacity as teacher, scientist, investigator and media spokesperson. Prior to becoming the Kansas Riverkeeper in August of 2003, Laura was a founding board member of Friends of the Kaw and has served 2 terms as secretary and 4 terms as president for the organization.

Laura presents “The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful--Our Kansas River” to a variety of groups in northeast Kansas. This power point or slide show documents the beauty of this prairie river focusing on the underused but outstanding recreational opportunity and many of the problems this natural resource faces.

As usual there will be a no-host dinner at Annie’s Place at 5:30pm before the program meeting. All TAS members are welcome.

This is serious. Volunteers needed!

Like many non-profit groups, TAS has a small, dedicated group of volunteers who have been rotating officer positions and responsibilities to keep our mission alive: To increase public understanding of natural ecosystems through preservation, recreation and education. TAS is facing a crisis in leadership. New blood is needed desperately. Please volunteer for an officer, board member, field trip leader or count coordinator position. We need you to participate in our organization! Contact any of the following people to inquire about positions:

President Joe Kun, 582-4662, joe.kun@bcbsks.com

Vice President Janeen Walters, 286-3330,
waltejan@mindspring.com

Secretary Melody Pollom, 286-2033, pollomhome@hotmail.com

Treasurer Glen Caspers, 246-1294, Glen.Caspers@osbckansas.org

Executive Secretary Joanna Lacoursiere, 266-7843,
lacour2@mindspring.com

Board Member and Newsletter Editor Carol Morgan, 272-6766,
crxmorgan@aol.com

Board Member and Website editor Patsy Rush, 271-5936,
patsy_rush@sbcglobal.net

Board Member Diana Llamas, 228-9897, mdllamas@cox.net

Board Member Rhonda Simpson, 272-1542, yatyah@aol.com

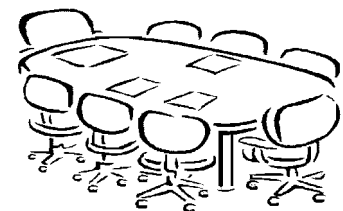
Board Member Sandy Bohnsack, 273-7353

Board Member Bob Lawson, 272-7304, bob35scot@yahoo.com

Field Trip Leader and NAMC Coordinator Dan Gish, 232-3731,
gishbear@cox.net

Christmas Bird Count Coordinator Gary Haden, 273-5598,
gchaden@earthlink.net

Officer Duties:
see page 4.



Topeka Audubon Society

Annual Meeting and Spring Dinner

April 10, 2007

Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave. Social Hour 6:00pm. Dinner at 6:30pm. Menu: Chicken Kiev, ham, buttered potatoes, peas, salad/dressings, roll & butter, assorted cakes, iced tea and water. Cost for dinner and program: \$18.50 per person.

Program Featuring: Bob Gress “Chasing Woodland Birds”

Bob Gress is the Director of the Great Plains Nature Center and a member of Wichita Audubon Society (WAS). He has been photographing birds for publications for 30 years. He has photographed all of the easy ones. The difficult birds he's left for last. A commitment by Bob, and fellow WAS member Pete Janzen, to finish a book on Kansas birds for the University Press of Kansas has forced Bob into a yearlong panic to photograph some of these elusive and colorful birds of the woodland canopy. Join Bob in greeting April migrants as they cross the Gulf of Mexico to land at High Island, Texas. In May these migrants flood into Kansas. In June we visit the Boreal forests of northern Wisconsin and the Apostle Islands to chase warblers on the nesting grounds. Join us for this colorful look at warblers, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, orioles and more. New technologies in digital cameras, flashes, recordings, and computer equipment has brought these birds of the shadows into light.



Registration Form: Deadline to register is April 8. Make check payable to: Topeka Audubon Society. Please fill out the form below and send to: Janeen Walters, 3440 NW Button Road, Topeka, KS 66618. Questions? Call Janeen at 286-3330.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Number of people attending: _____ x \$18.50 each, Total remitted: _____

TAS Officer Responsibilities

continued from Page 1

President: shall preside at all meetings, be empowered to call special meetings, appoint all committees except as provided, be an *ex officio* member of all committees, and perform such other duties as may properly come with the office. The President shall act as Chairman of the Board.

Vice-President: shall perform the duties of the President at times as the President is absent or is unable to perform such duties. The Vice-President shall serve as Program Chairperson.

Secretary: shall keep complete and accurate minutes of all meetings, issue notices of meetings, conduct correspondence as may be directed by the President, and act as Secretary of the Board.

Executive Secretary: shall generally aid the President and the Board in looking after the business affairs of the Society, write checks in the absence of the Treasurer, serve as correspondent in matters concerning the National Audubon Society, coordinate efforts to recruit and retain members, keep complete membership records, help correlate activities between committees, make an annual report and provide administrative continuity from year to year.

Treasurer: shall be custodian of all funds belonging to the Society, and shall pay out and expend the same only

upon vouchers duly authorized and approved by the President or Executive Secretary.

Board of Directors: The Board shall have the power to act on all matters pertaining to the Society, except as otherwise provided by this constitution. The Board is directed and empowered to consider, adopt, and put into effect practicable ways and means by which the Society may further the objectives for which it is founded, including the receipt and administration of gifts and properties. The board shall not incur financial obligations beyond the actual content of the Treasury. The proceedings of the Board, including the financial transactions, shall be reported at each annual meeting of the Society.

NAMC and CBC Coordinators: shall organize these annual events, seeking volunteers to participate in birding sections of the city and/or county, collating results and forwarding results to the National Audubon Society

Bird Seed Sale Chair: shall organize these events, seeking volunteers to order and haul birdseed, take orders and accept payments.

Publicity Chair: shall communicate information of the society to media, including newspapers, television and radio stations to ensure public knowledge of events and activities of the society.

PLEASE VOLUNTEER!

Field Trip Report: “A Little Cold Snap” at Tuttle Creek

The car thermometer registered 8 degrees the morning of Feb. 3 as I pulled away from my house and headed to Gage Park Zoo to see if anyone was as crazy as I was to be birding in such frigid weather. It turned out that seven other intrepid birders were not to be deterred by a “little cold snap”. (Richard Field, Rhonda Simpson, Linda Zempel, Carol Morgan, Patsy Rush, Joanna Lacoursiere, and Sarah Merrill) We made our first stop at Pillsbury Crossing Recreation Area southeast of Manhattan. We were greeted by a flock of twenty-five Rusty Blackbirds foraging in the shallow rock bottomed ford that had not frozen due to occasional autos crossing. We walked the short loop trail and found White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Cardinal, Tree Sparrow, Eastern Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Our next stop was the Stockdale area of Tuttle Creek Reservoir where a Northern Shrike had been recently reported. Linda and I had a brief look at a brown-tinged shrike flying away from us but we were unable to relocate it. Our group came upon many groups of Juncos, Tree Sparrow, Harris’s sparrows, and unusually high numbers of Cardinals at roadside.....perhaps eating salt that had been used to treat the road for ice. At another stop we found a nice covey of Bobwhite Quail sitting in some short grass trying to soak up as much sunshine as they could to counteract the cold ground temperature.

Some of our sightings came from Outlet Park below the dam: Hooded merganser, Common merganser, Gadwall, Mallard, and Common goldeneye. At Rocky Ford Recreation Area we found a lone White-fronted Goose swimming with a group of Canadas. We ended our field trip with forty-four species.

Field Trip Leader Dan Gish

Conservation Corner

Information from Ron Klataske, Exec. Dir. Audubon of Kansas

Senate Bill No. 257 was introduced on Friday, Feb. 2 (Groundhog Day) by the Kansas Senate Natural Resources Committee. It is designed to revise the century old "eradication" statutes that allow counties to force landowners to poison off all of their prairie dog colonies. Senator Carolyn McGinn is the chairperson of the Natural Resources Committee. Please communicate to your own state senator your support for SB 257. The email address for your state senator is his or her last name followed by "@senate.state.ks.us". For example: mcginn @ senate.state.ks.us.

UPDATE (2-15-07): Please Find below a copy of an email that I just sent to Senator McGinn and other members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee. It appears that Senator McGinn is not going to, or be able to, schedule a hearing on Senate Bill 257. The only way she can is if she schedules a special committee meeting on Monday and/or Tuesday (Feb 19-20)—possibly made possible because the Senate Agricultural Committee may not have any meetings and that could make time and a meeting room available. Senator McGinn's top priority is to finish work on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program bill for the upper Arkansas River (a very important initiative), and secondarily to work KDWP's deer bill.

I am still hoping that she can find an opportunity to give attention and the committee's leadership to S.B. 257, but it is not looking promising. The legislative schedule requires that most bills (except those given exempt status) must be reported out of committee by the end of the day next Wednesday, February 21. It is also not helpful to the Senate Committee to hear that Representative John Faber, Chair of the House Ag and Natural Resources Committee, will not be willing to have a hearing on the bill if it passes the Senate and reaches the House. Rep. Faber has always been a pro eradication statute advocate. One individual (a committee chairperson) can hold everybody hostage. However, I think that much would be accomplished by a hearing and approval of a bill in the Senate.

Dear Senator McGinn:

There are a number of reasons why the status quo for the century-old statutes requiring landowners to eradicate prairie dogs (and indirectly all the other wildlife dependent on prairie dogs as prey or habitat) is a blemish on the State of Kansas and why it is compelling that it should be addressed by the Kansas Legislature as soon as possible. The antiquated statutes effectively prevent landowners from participating in both federally financed, state and other cooperative conservation programs, such as the "Landowner Incentive Program" recently awarded to the State of Kansas and funded with \$667,000. Please review the January 4 news release...for additional details. In addition, the State Technical Committee for USDA is working on a similar program for inclusion in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funded at a much higher level for a diverse list of conservation programs. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife has funded a Private Lands Stewardship Grant of \$93,000 for a program to manage prairie dog colonies on three ranches in Logan County with the purpose of demonstrating that dispersal can be contained, and USFWS has allocated another \$40,000 to K-State Research and Extension for lethal control of prairie dogs on neighboring lands. This particular site is the best location for a Black-footed Ferret experimental Reintroduction in Kansas.

All of these programs are in jeopardy—along with the property rights of the landowners if the 1909 eradication statutes continue to be the foundation for misguided "stewardship" of at-risk species in the shortgrass prairies of western Kansas. Please consider any and all options for addressing this issue.

Ron Klataske, Exec. Dir. Audubon of Kansas

If you have news or info you would like included in the newsletter, send it to crxmorgan@aol.com or mail to Carol Morgan, 2607 SW Westport Drive, Topeka, KS 66614-2513.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT RESULTS

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
Total Checklists Submitted:	75699	60616	51912
Total Species Observed:	621	623	613
Total Individual Birds Counted:	10,521,803	7,590,882	6,505,715

See the Top Ten Lists! Check the Map Room, State Tallies and reports available at: www.birdsource.org



Calendar of Events

March 2007

- 10 Field Trip*: Clinton Reservoir, meet at Dillons, 29th & California, 7:30am.
- 13 Program Meeting: Laura Calwell, Friends of the Kaw, TSCPL**, 7:00pm
- 15 Board Meeting: **NOTE LOCATION:** Carol Morgan's house, 2607 SW Westport Drive, phone 272-6766, crxmorgan@aol.com, 7:00pm
- 24 Field Trip*: Felker Park, meet at east end of parking lot at 7:00am.

April 2007

- 10 Annual Spring Dinner; Guest Speaker is Bob Gress "Chasing Woodland Birds"
- 14 Field Trip*: Wabaunsee County Prairie Birds, meet at zoo parking lot, 6:00am.
- 21 Field Trip: Overland Park Arboretum and KPL Wetlands, meet at Dillons at 29th & California 7:00am.

May 2007

- 5 Field Trip*: Camp Hammond & Lake Shawnee, meet at Dillons at 29th & California 7:00am.
- 12 North American Migration Count. Details TBA
- 16 Board Meeting: TSCPL** 7:00pm
- 19 Field Trip*: Felker Park, meet at east end of parking lot at 7:00am.

* Contact Dan Gish at gishbear@cox.net or 232-3731 for more information regarding field trips.

**Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

Paul Willis Honored by Shawnee Heights High School

Paul Willis was one of the first two inductees into the Shawnee Heights Wall of Honor sponsored by the school's Renaissance Club. Willis was a teacher at SHHS from 1963 to 1989. He also served on the school board from 1993 to 1997. Willis is also a long-time member of the Topeka Audubon Society, and served as President for 1998-99 and 2001-02. ***Congratulations to our friend, teacher and fellow birder, Paul Willis!***

Topeka Audubon Society

An affiliate of the National Audubon Society

President.....Joe Kun
 Vice President.....Janeen Walters
 Secretary.....Melody Pollom
 Treasurer.....Glen Caspers
 Executive Secretary.....Joanna Lacoursiere
 Newsletter Editor.....Carol Morgan
 Website.....Patsy Rush

Send address changes to:

**Joanna Lacoursiere, 28 Peppertree Lane
 Topeka, KS 66611**

Address Service Requested

Executive Secretary
 Joanna Lacoursiere
 28 Peppertree Lane
 Topeka, KS 66611

Society News

Audubon

Topeka



A hearty thank you to all who watch the address label on the newsletter and renew your chapter-only membership as it becomes due. This serves as your renewal notice. See renewal form inside this newsletter. Let Joanna Lacoursiere know of address changes, too.

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