

Sternberg Museum – Sat. July 27th

Don't miss this day trip to the Sternberg Museum in Hays!

Leave 8 a.m. via VAN (\$10/person)

Meet at City Parking lot at 6th and Houston

Brunch/lunch - 11:00 a.m. at family-owned restaurant

Tour - 1:00 (approx. 2 hrs) Museum

(group rate \$7/person)

RSVP by Tues. July 23:

Cindy Jeffrey - 785-565-3326 or cinraney@ksu.edu

or Patricia Yeager - 785-776-9593



Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society,
P.O. Box 1932, Manhattan, KS 66505-1932



prairie falcon

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

July 2- TUESDAY 6:00 Board Meeting
Friends Rm. Manhattan Public Library

July 13- Sat. morning birding 8:00 a.m.
Sojourner Truth Park

July 27- Trip to Sternberg Museum, Hays

SEE ABOVE AND VISIT

<http://sternberg.fhsu.edu/>



Skylight plus

Pete Cohen

A Springtime Ref-rain

Springtime came in Twenty Eighteen
and summer duly followed.
But scarcely a drop of water was seen
to help the surrounding scene turn green.
Creeks and ponds were hollowed.

Bugs and bees, tomatoes and trees
were equally affected.
the pasture grass declined to grow.
many gardens had little to show.
The weather had defected.

Such were the times that are called drought,
you can deny it never.
Of that there was no manner of doubt,
no possible probable shadow of doubt,
no possible doubt whatever.

But now we're in a different year
that has its own desires.
It wants to turn all ground to mud,
It likes to pour till it raises a flood,
creating morasses and mires.

During the next two months, high above Cayuga's and Tuttle Creek's, and everybody's else's waters, the celestial denizens will have more notable occasions than can be mentioned here, so I'll pick a few, giving Saturn first billing. It will be rising early each evening with its rings mostly spread, becoming opposite the Sun and thus particularly bright on July 9th. It will be located low in the south just left of the "Teapot" in Sagittarius. On the 15th, The Old Farmer's Almanac declares, it will seem to move past the Moon and beat it to dawn's western finish line. On August 16th it'll be more of a tie.

Jupiter will begin the nights brightly about a third up the SE sky. It will move close to the Moon July 13th, and on August 11th seem not to move at all, as its pace and the Earth's coincide. Venus, in the early dawn twilights, and Mars and Mercury in the early evening twilights, will make low, brief, hard-to-see showings, Venus disappearing to prepare to return as the Evening Star in October.

In addition to Jupiter and Saturn, as mentioned, the Moon will help locate, by its nearby appearance: Virgo's Spica July 9th, Scorpius' Antares the 12th, and Taurus' Aldebaran the 27th and 28th. Then, in August, Spica again on the 5th, Jupiter the 9th, Saturn the 11th, and Aldebaran the 24th. It will be new July 2nd (2p10) and again the 31st (10p12) and August 30th (5a37). Fullness comes July 16th (4p38) and August 15th (7a20).

And no matter what our atmospheric temperature will be for the Fourth of July, we will be as far from the Sun as we get.

The watering hose is left unused,
and so is the tank for hauling.
This way and that you have to try
to keep covered the things you want to stay dry,
so leaks can be appalling.

But there is no rain valve to be closed
no matter how we're clever.
So the rains can wander all about,
of that there is no shadow of doubt,
no possible doubt whatever.

Last year the rains finally did come late;
perhaps this year they'll stop.
But until the sky fills up with blue
and carries only a cloud or two,
keep handy the sandbag and mop.

And pause to enjoy the misty views.
the rooftops' dancing patter.
the hidden gurglings, and the puddles' shimmer--
Those dry-time memories will only grow dimmer
without the reminder of splatter.

Now this spring's most past and summer's nigh,
again onward we'll endeavor,
to get along with our water supply,
come what may or may not from our sky.
To water's tyranny we defy or comply, whatever.

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Ancients of the Earth

Dru Clarke



"We are the Ancients of the Earth, And in the morning of the times."

~ Tennyson

When I was still teaching, kids would bring me 'stuff', treasures they'd found on their explorations as they made the world their own. Much of it was inorganic, thankfully, as the organic ones – such as the lime green-tailed baby copperhead David Johnson clutched in his quivering hand – sometimes posed a questionable threat to health.

Several of these gifts I now treasure. A boy hefted a cloth bag onto my desk and retrieved a part glossy, part chalky – looking lump of stone, layered like a flaky pastry. It had obviously been broken on one side. It had come from spoils of a gravel operation on the Big Blue River east of town. My hunch as to its identity proved correct: it was a mammoth tooth from an adult animal. Where and how it had lived and how it had died remain a thought-provoking mystery, but in my mind's eye I can see it peacefully munching like a tusked Ferdinand, then resting for an afternoon nap.



Most stories in the rock are fossilized, the original material being replaced by minerals dissolved in water that bathes the remains. Kansas, as oceans came and went, is a place where troves of fossils can be found, where these ocean waters flowed, and sediments blanketed past (and passed) life forms.

Road cuts and creek banks where often layers of limestone – the rock formed by calcareous sediment solidifying on sea floor (e.g. Smoky Hill chalk, Niobrara chalk) – are exposed, pose the most promising sites to explore. Abandoned quarries too. The spillway canyon created after the '93 flood at Tuttle Creek reservoir opened the past to 300 million years ago, and one lucky pair found a previously unidentified shark species. Reddish orange crystals of selenium betrayed the presence of past tidal pools, like those we'd find on the Pacific coast and Maine – but right here in the heartland.



Most commonly found are mineralized hard-bodied creatures, like ancient clams, brachiopods, and ammonites or the tunnels bored by marine worms. Occasionally one might turn up fossilized poop.

On Florida's Gulf coast, we used "Florida snow shovels" – screen covered baskets on long handles – to sift the beach sands for fossil shark and ray teeth, blackened and shining against the pale sand grains.

Here in Kansas, go west for the best exploring. The recently revised book "Oceans of Kansas" by Michael J. Everhart (Indiana University Press) is a perfect companion for finding and identifying fossils. Another, older guide entitled "Fossils for Amateurs" by Russell P. MacFall and Jay Wollin is helpful in preparing for field trips and subsequent techniques for cleaning, classifying and displaying your finds. And for a rich look at these "Ancients" go to Sternberg Museum at Fort Hays State University (Hays, Ks.) where the famous "fish within a fish" found in geology textbooks world-wide is displayed. (My husband, as a student at Fort Hays State, dusted this relic!) On July 27, NFHAS is staging a chauffeured trip to Sternberg.



On a shelf at home lies a jeweled slab of rock covered with calcite crystals that a student retrieved from the Kansas River. Outside, lining the walk, is a series of unusual rocks, one of which is pocked with centimeter wide holes, made by boring piddocks, a type of clam with razor sharp valves (shells) they use to abrade the hard surface. Remains of some of the bioeroding animals are lodged in these holes.

Today on California's coast you can find living examples of these ancient forms. Take a walk, pick up and pick at a rock, look closely. You can never tell what you might discover from the past.



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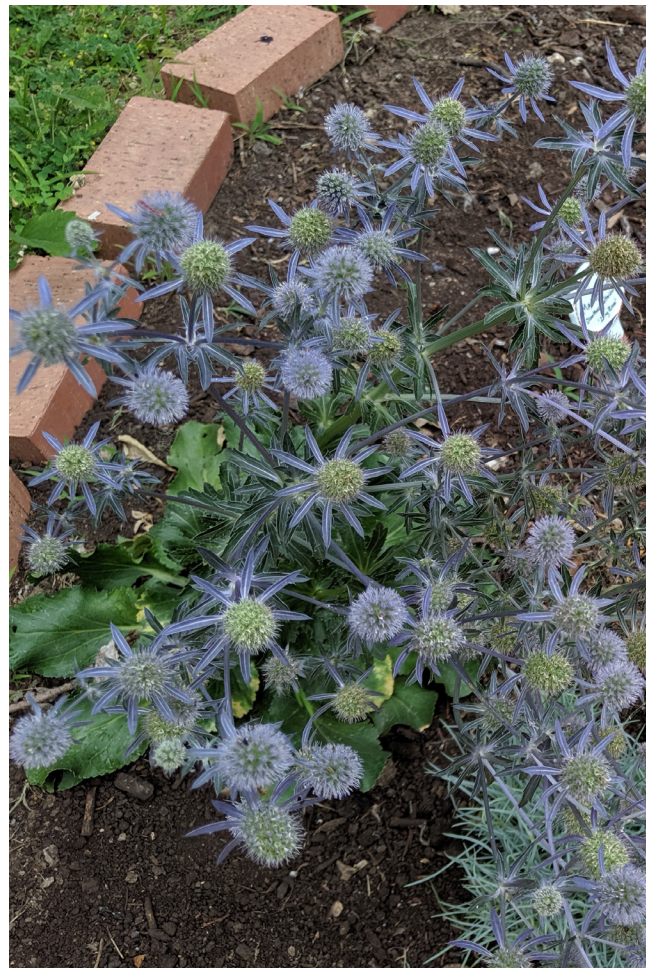
Bird Seed Sale in the Fall

We would like to continue our Bird Seed Sale, but need someone to chair/head this endeavor. If you are interested please contact Cindy Jeffrey, 785-565-3326 or cinraney@ksu.edu.

We used to have two sales a year, but have not had the personnel to get it organized for more than one in the past couple of years.

Alsop Bird Sanctuary

If you haven't visited the Alsop lately, you should. It is "evolving" and every week is exciting. The last of the bricks will be put in place in the next month or so, And plantings are ongoing.



Notes from NFHAS Board

At our last board meeting (June 12th) Carla Bishop performed her last official act as NFHAS treasurer. We said goodbye to her, a bittersweet moment with hugs and well wishes. She has been a member for about 30 years!!

The “handover” went smoothly, with all of our financial records, procedures, checkbooks, etc. - so organized- moving from Carla to Patty.

We welcome Patty to our board and again, THANK YOU Carla for your service and THANK YOU Patty for taking on this important job.

The Board also voted to be a sponsor of the The Friends of Konza Prairie (FOKP) annual art show. The Friends of Konza is involved in an annual art show that showcases the beauty of the Flint Hills in pieces of art (paintings, photographs, sculpture, jewelry, fabric pieces, etc...). The artwork is displayed at the Buttonwood Art Space for one month in the autumn (Oct- Nov) and is available for sale to the public. If a piece sells, FOKP receives 50% of the sale; the artist receives the other 50%.

2019 is the 6th year for FOKP to be involved with this program. So far, the “Visions” collaboration has raised over \$30,000 for FOKP, which then further enables it to support KEEP(Konza Environmental Education Program <https://keep.konza.k-state.edu/>).





Northern Flint Hills
Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1932
Manhattan, KS
66505-1932

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The purpose of the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society is to teach people to enjoy and respect birds and their habitats. NFHAS advocates preservation of prairie ecosystems and urban green spaces thus saving the lives of birds and enriching the lives of people.

Also available online at nfhas.org

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Edited by Cindy Jeffrey, 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520. (cinraney@ksu.edu)
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WE NEED YOU!

PLEASE consider joining our NFHAS Board.

Contact Patricia Yeager if interested, and watch our website and newsletter for time and day of meeting.

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776-9593

Education:

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Newsletter: [Cindy Jeffrey](mailto:cinraney@ksu.edu) - cinraney@ksu.edu 565-3326

Fieldtrips: Patricia Yeager, Kevin Fay 776-9593

AOK Representative: Cindy Jeffrey

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Contacts for Your Elected Representatives (anytime) Write, call or email: Governor: 2nd Floor, State Capital Bldg., Topeka , KS 66612. KS Senator or Representative: State Capital Bldg., Topeka, KS 66612. Ph# (during session only) Senate - 785-296-7300. House - 785-296-7500. U.S. Senator Roberts <Roberts@senate.gov> U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510. Jerry Moran U.S. Capital Switchboard 202-224-3121.