

Area Christmas Bird Counts

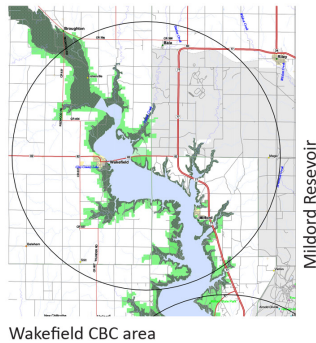
<https://ksbirds.org/>

Dec. 12th Olsburg CBC
contact Cindy Jeffrey, cinraney@ksu.edu

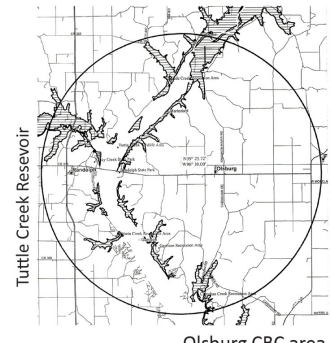
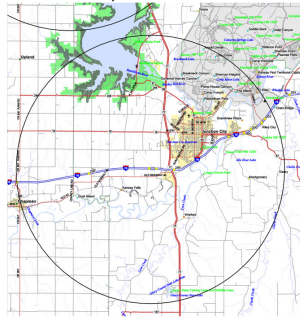
Dec. 19th Manhattan CBC
contact Mark Mayfield markherb@ksu.edu

Dec. 20th Wakefield (Milford)
contact Chuck Otte cotte@ksu.edu

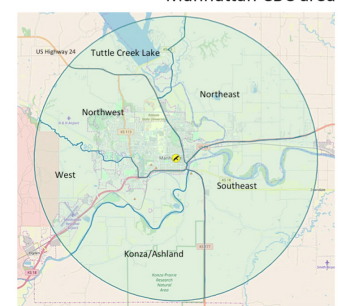
Dec. 27th Junction City CBC
contact Chuck Otte cotte@ksu.edu



Junction City CBC area



Manhattan CBC area



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



prairie falcon

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Newsletter

Vol. 49, No. 4, December 2020

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Upcoming Events

Dec. 8 - TUESDAY Board Meeting- 6:00 pm,
contact a board member if interested

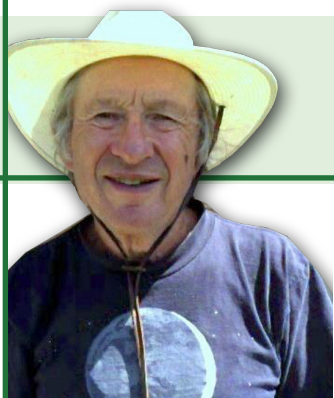
Area CBC

Olsburg CBC- Dec. 12th

Manhattan CBC Dec. 19th

Wakefield (Milford)- Dec. 20th

Junction City CBC- Dec. 27th



Skylight plus

Pete Cohen

I've had, set aside for some future viewing, 12 DVD lectures on the history of medicine. Amid the immediate pandemic that future seemed now. The lectures, marketed by

The Great Courses company, are given by a professor of surgery at Yale, Sherwin B. Nuland, who concentrates on Western culture, and deals with the subject by a series of biographies, which made it convenient to do some comparative research on-line and by print. This I pass on as a non-expert reporter hoping it can provide some interesting perspective on the current situation.

Dr. Nuland begins by positing that in antiquity healing consisted of appeals or responses aimed to ward off various supernatural mal-intentioned deities or forces. And that Hippocrates, born on the Grecian island of Cos about 460 b.c.e., is the first person known to have rejected that approach and teach that the focus should be on the patient as a natural being. He believed each person was imbued with four "humors": blood, yellow and dark bile, and phlegm; that illness revealed an imbalance among them. A physician's duty was to discern that imbalance by a consideration of certain symptoms in accord with an assessment of a patient's total personality and environment. Such guided any treatment regimen which may or may not have involved any invasive actions or potions.

Great emphasis was placed on "duty", not only to "do no harm" but to treat the patient with dignity, privacy, and honesty. Meticulous records were kept so that the relationship between diagnosis and prognosis became better known. Dr. Nuland says that so many people absorbed such training that a reference to "Hippocrates" now includes their numbers as a whole. And I find in this a suggestion that there was a great deal of humbug about, and that this personal, respectful and honest manner helped to gain the Hippocratic practitioners a great deal of prominence. At the same time it seems, to me, that their results were not successful enough (fever was regarded as an imbalance of blood, and blood-letting was employed), and his disciples became too divided in their methods, to sustain their popularity. For whatever reason, after about two centuries their prevalence had faded and the general populace reverted to a reliance on superstition-based remedies.

Then in the 2nd century c.e. a Turkish born man known today as Galen received a wide education from several medical philosophers of his day and obtained a certain knowledge of human anatomy while serving a few years as an attending physician at gladiatorial combats. He continued Hippocrates' belief in the four

humors and offered his potions based on ingredients that he thought would contravene imbalances. And I found one source saying he put faith also in the benefits of amulets and similar tokens.

But he apparently rose to prominence initiating a reliance on experimentation, doing a great deal of dissection. It was mainly vivisection, however, there being great pressure against studious violations of the human body, so a lot of those results were inaccurate when applied to humans. He believed that some demiurge (i.e. vague creator) scheme dictated that that the stomach be near the liver so food could move easily to the organ that he thought made blood. A bit off there, but by cutting the vocal cords of a squealing pig he clearly proved that voice came from the voice box and not the heart, as was thought. He wrote voluminously about his efforts to understand the pulse and the many other physiological and anatomical aspects, creating 22 volumes, alleging, I'm told, that they contained all that need be known medically.

Thus there were times when (not surprisingly, considering other historic human behavior) he received physical threats because of his positions. That notwithstanding, his volumes of causes and treatments seem to have been useful enough that they became the gospel of medical practice for the next twelve hundred years, during which time any who put forth non-Galenistic ideas were not well-received. But times kept changing. In the 800s Hindus invented the numerals we now use, which in the 1100s Europeans began to adopt from the Arabs. In 1215, in England at least, Magna Carta became a milestone toward individual rights. And in 1543, I've found, a sea change occurred in the history of medicine- to be continued in next January newsletter.

During the coming December Venus will be rising brightly in the dawns, starting a little after 4am, and a little later each day. On the 14th it will provide an encore to whatever zipping lights the rather dependable Gemini meteor shower will have provided, showing up against a dark new Moon sky. A half Moon should sink before midnight the 21st to let a hopefully enhanced Ursid shower have a chance to be seen through the hours following.

Yet the main event of the month will occur earlier in that evening's twilight. Jupiter, which has been chasing behind Saturn for some time, will catch up, and the two will shine low in the west almost as one marvelous 'star'. They combine so every 19.6 years, because of the varying rates at which the two planets complete a swing round their orbits. The occurrences have been noted going on, roughly every 20 years, back through antiquity, and are known as the "Great Conjunction". We missed out on it back in 2000, because it happened when the Sun was shining.

The Moon, as noted, will be new the 14th (at 10a17); full the 29th (at 9p28).

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The Leafless Land

Dru Clarke



Native trees, excepting a few like oaks with their leaves' tenacious holds on twigs, have shed their summer foliage. The cottonwoods, too, are reluctant to loose/lose theirs, each gold leaf juddering in a frenetic dance from high limbs: a lofty celebration. Our white mulberry shed all at once, after one very chill night, and the leaves crunched like corn flakes spilled on the ground.

Our concept of leaves is tree-bound, but knee high in the prairie are the unsung leaves of grasses, subtle in their slender, now brittle shafts. In a dried state, their leaves clasp the stems which become virtually indistinguishable from one another, like a child clinging to its mother. The fuzzy seeds of little bluestem resemble the tufts of hair in our calves' ears. Little bluestem seems a misnomer: its stems and leaves are a dusty rose, and in its bunch-like growth, the color is a richer rose pink to adobe.

Silver bluestem, with its cottony caterpillar-like seed head, has leaves colored like little blue, but its stems are a buff. Indian grass, big bluestem, switch grass, all taller than silver and little bluestem, create a beige backdrop to these spots of color and, on a slow walk, one can appreciate the yellow marbles of ground cherry and the ruby red rosettes of forbs that will sprout next spring.

On the grassy hill crowned by the osage orange tree a bleached anomaly stands out: a buck's skull with antlers still in place, the tip of one tine chewed. Two years before, an anxious bow hunter knocked on our door and said she had arrow-shot a deer but that he had bounded away and she had tried to track him, to no avail. She asked us to keep a lookout. Found, he hangs in memoriam, a forlorn mount that rodents over time will whittle down to dust.

The dog chases the last frogs in the north pond, halted temporarily by the floating leaves of pondweed,

still green into these Indian summer days. I worry because there is a snapping turtle there, but his lunge may be sluggish or nonplussed in pursuit of churning dog legs. Migrating ducks don't stay long on this pond, but our south one has a dozen each morning.



Photos by Dru Clarke

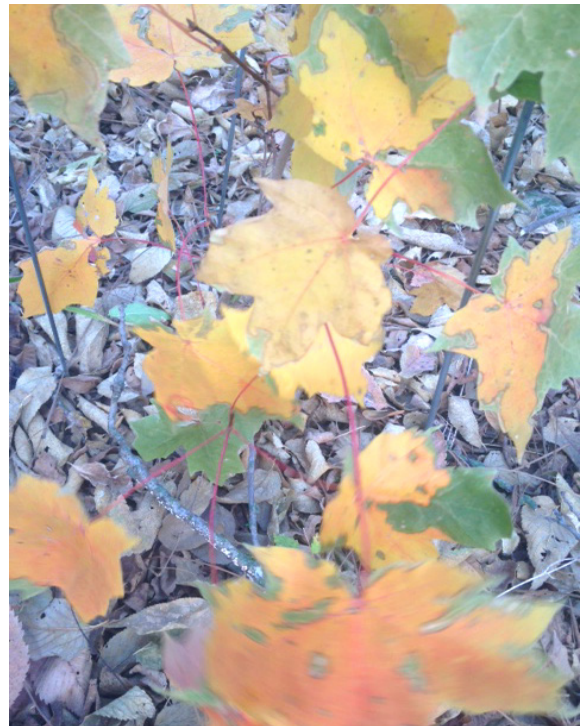
Quail line-dance across the road in front of my husband on his morning walk (a tall man, he is also very quiet in his demeanor), and they erupt with whirring wings from grass in front of me as I make my way back home. They are invisible before this explosive escape as they shape-shift from the inert grasses. The dog runs in circles not knowing which way to chase. He is nonplussed.

In the neighbor's pasture, on the morning the quail paraded, a lone coyote, visible as s/he pronked in the tall grass, probably jumping on voles, kept showing up further along until s/he meandered all the way to the crossroad. Two doe emerged from the naked trees and leapt effortlessly over the fence. They may be the ones who come to our pond to drink: one was 'caught' on our trail camera. Dish-shaped depressions in the grass where they sleep at night betray their otherwise elusive presence. Is it their kin's skull that hangs on our shed? And, do they miss him?

While I prefer "a land of boughs in leaf,"* the leafless land is not bereft of wonders to discover.

(*after A.E. Housman's autumn poem, *I Love No Leafless Land*)

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Manhattan Christmas Bird Count

Mark Mayfield

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On December 19th, bird enthusiasts are invited to participate in the 72nd annual Manhattan Christmas Bird Count (CBC). This is the 121st season of The Christmas Bird Count, an ongoing effort by the National Audubon Society to census winter birds. The Manhattan CBC, like all count circles (see map above), is 15 miles in diameter and we will count all birds seen within a 24 hour period on the day of the count. New participants are always welcomed and expert birding skills are not required! If you would like to participate in the count, please contact Mark Mayfield (markherb@ksu.edu, or 785-410-3073) so that he can get your name in the participants contact list and put you in touch with a sector leader.

This year, the National Audubon Society has issued guidelines for the count to which we must adhere. They are as follows:

There will be NO in-person compilation gatherings. I take this to include compilations by sector leaders. We will have to come up with workarounds and I suppose safely distanced outdoor meetings with masks would comply.

Social distancing and/or masking are required at all times in the field (interpreted to mean social distance should be maintained or masks should be worn, or both).

Carpooling may only occur within existing familiar or social "pod" groups.

Activities must comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

Please be aware, if the situation with COVID worsens significantly, the compiler may cancel the event.

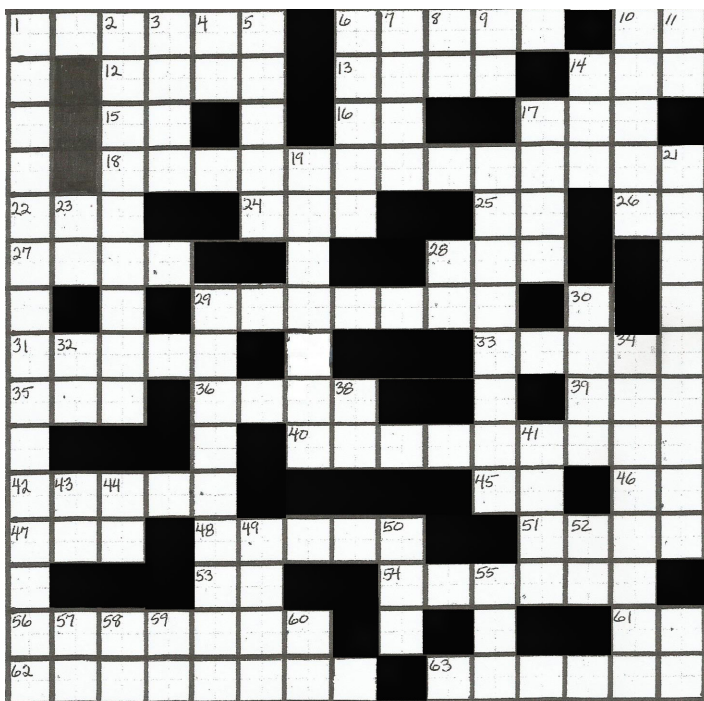
Per usual, the count will be held in sun, rain or snow, but arrangements can be made if you can only participate for part of the day. If you would like to count birds at your feeders on December 19th as part of the surveys, contact Mark for instructions and a checklist. Please note that counting birds at feeders by field parties is not considered as feeder counting unless it is a separate effort (a field party would incorporate feeder birds exactly the same as they would all others).

You will be notified by email of plans for a virtual compilation dinner to be held as a Zoom meeting within a couple of days after the count (probably on Sunday evening). Please join us to hear reports of the day's sightings and stories from the day's adventures! Please arrange to give your results to the sector coordinator for the area prior to the compilation. In order to contribute your data, each birding party is required (by National Audubon Society) to report their field effort in addition to the species totals. This means that, in addition to the birds your party sees and hears from your route, each party will also need to keep track of the start and end times (to the nearest 1/4 hour) and the distance you travelled (separated as to the distance on foot and by car, or other method-boat, for example). If you have questions about how to submit data, please contact me, Mark Mayfield, ahead of time. Also note that all parties must be in contact with a sector leader in order to participate.

Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus there will be no Chili Supper - you will have to make your own at home! But hopefully you have a great count!!

Thank you to the birdseed buyers. Even in this slow activity year we need funds to help pay taxes on the properties we own, cover postage and buy a few plants and supplies for our gardens.

Crossword Puzzle #4



Across:

1. Air bubble/delay
6. Especially helpful to ID water birds
10. Ruthenium
12. Indication of holiness
13. Rudolph's is red
14. Call for help
15. A word at the beginning of a speculative sentence
16. Right eye
17. Mormon University
18. Usually found in small flocks / a CBC species
22. Large hoofed animal found in KS
24. Cowboy singer/actor of the mid 1900s
25. Indicates choice
26. Hello
27. Part of an old phone
28. Style of the late 1960s
29. The only diving duck likely to be seen in KS in the summer (as per KS Birds)
31. Farmer McDonald's lyric
33. What birder's do around Christmas time
35. Route
36. Fly
39. The caterpillar of the ____ sock moth is likely to irritate your skin
40. Slows motion. Birds don't need it.
42. 1973 vice president of the U.S. that resigned amid scandal.
45. KSU rival
46. Helium
47. The baby boomers were also called the ____ generation.
48. Sky color on a clear day
51. Deceiver
53. Turn over (abbr.)
54. Bird seed grain that comes red or white
56. When picking a field guide that covers only 1/2 of the U.S you will want the ____ guide for Manhattan KS.

61. Cesium

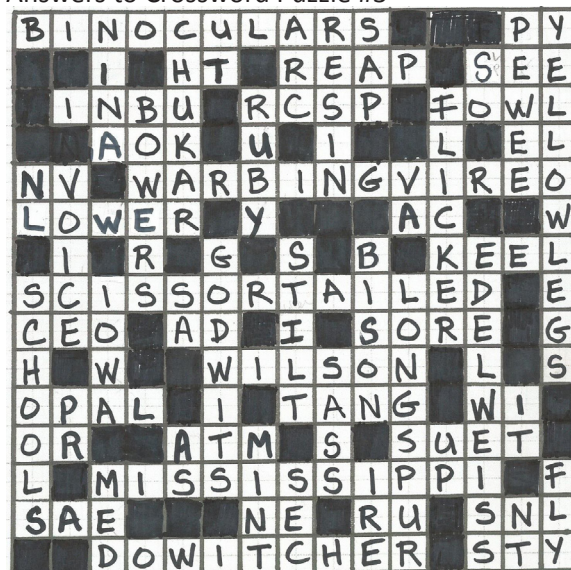
62. If retired, these often make good birding trails.

63. When observing wading birds, it is helpful to take note of their relative ____.

DOWN:

1. It's black and white but only rusty red on it's side. The wings whistle in flight.
2. Popular feeder bird
3. Stop here for lunch.
4. Indicates safety
5. Cold ends of the earth
6. Tundra nester
7. End of a movement (music)
8. Out of stock
9. Gym class
10. Feathered legs of this hawk gives it it's name
11. Our country
17. Animal with feathers
19. Tool to find your way
20. Nocturnal shorebird found in moist wooded areas
21. Vacationer
23. Lithium
28. Mom
29. Fragrant solution used as beauty product for centuries
30. Ballerina attire
32. When you need tech help, "who you gonna call?"
34. Upside down feeder bird
38. Radium
41. Ships and nuts have this word in common
43. Pass it and get points in New Year's Eve board game
44. Northwest
49. Masked hero of old
50. Second tallest living bird
52. That is
55. Used to make home-made soap a century ago
57. Self-help organization
58. Silicon
59. Thallium
60. Informal no

Answers to Crossword Puzzle #3





Northern Flint Hills
Audubon Society
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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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Also available online at nfhas.org

Membership Information: Introductory memberships- \$20/yr. then basic renewal membership is \$35/yr. When you join the National Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society. You will receive the bimonthly Audubon magazine in addition to the Prairie Falcon newsletter. New membership applications should be sent to National Audubon Society, PO Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250. Make checks payable to the National Audubon Society and include the code C4ZJ040Z. Questions about membership Call 1-800-274-4201 or email the National Audubon Society join@audubon.org. Website is www.audubon.org.

Subscription Information: If you do not want to receive the national magazine, but still want to be involved in NFHAS local activities, you may subscribe to the Prairie Falcon newsletter for \$15/yr. Make checks payable to the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, and mail to: Treasurer, NFHAS, P.O Box 1932, Manhattan, KS, 66505-1932

RARE BIRD HOTLINE: For information on Kansas Birds, subscribe to the Kansas Bird Listserve. Send this message <subscribe KSBIRD-L> to <list_serve@ksu.edu> and join in the discussions.

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