

Cecil Best Trail

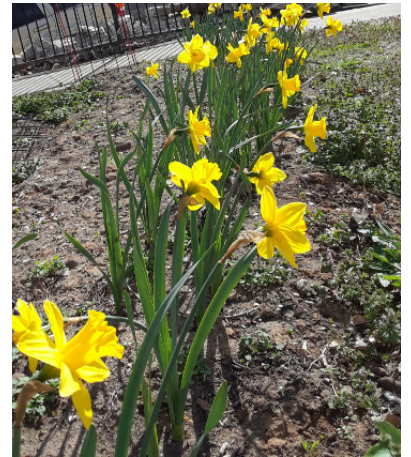


The bridge on the Cecil Best Trail was damaged when a tree was blown over.

It is a darn strong bridge as only the hand rail was broken. Kent and Patricia- our loyal fixer uppers, came to the rescue and repaired it.

THANK YOU KENT AND PATRICIA!!

Patricia also planted more flowers at the Alsop property.



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



prairie falcon

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Newsletter

Vol. 48, No. 10 June 2020

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Upcoming Events

Jun 2 - TUESDAY Board Meeting- 6:00 pm,
via Zoom.
Contact a board member if needed.

Jun 13 - Sat. morning Birding 8 am,
Depart Sojourner Truth Park.
(physical distancing will be maintained)

July 7- TUESDAY Board Meeting- 6:00 pm,
via Zoom.
Contact a board member if needed.



Skylight plus

Pete Cohen

“...and the wedding bells will chime”. For just ahead is another June, the month known for weddings. And rightly so, but barely so, according to one website (stevierayentertainment.com).

It reports that just 10.2% of the nearly 250,000 yearly weddings in the U.S. occur this month. With all the other months holding 9+%, except for March at 6.1, and January at 4.7. I imagine it would be hard for many to handle holiday plans and wedding plans seriatim. And since most plans are made ahead of time, this year the coronavirus may be causing the numbers to change.

Looking further into the subject of weddings or marriages would lead into a vast array of rites and methods, modern and historical, so let's look ahead this year to the month's end, Tuesday, June 30: Asteroid Day. After the Cheylabinsk meteor (66 feet in diameter, traveling at more than 40,000 mph) exploded close to ground in Russia February 15, 2013, injuring more than 1000 people, another asteroid appeared to be on a collision course with Earth in 2029. It was unhappily named Apophis, after an Egyptian god of chaos and darkness. Fortunately, further tracking has it passing visibly some 19,000 miles away. But there are others out there, of varying sizes.

In 2014 a group of individuals organized the now UN sanctioned Asteroid Day Foundation, headquartered in Luxembourg, to raise public “awareness of the science, opportunities and risks” associated with asteroids. The first Asteroid Day occurred on June 30, 2015, the date chosen to match the date of the Tunguska Event in 1908 when a meteorite exploded low over another part of Russia, flattening (according to Wikipedia) an estimated 80 million trees over an area of 830 square miles—in a region so sparsely populated that only three human deaths have been mentioned, and those unconfirmed.

The Foundation's website states that since the end of June, 2015, it has supported thousands of school programs and other organized events worldwide (not necessarily all on a June 30th), while also providing online material every day plus a 24-hour global broadcast. And I gather that an underlying aim is to promote support for funds for more tracking capabilities and research into ways to respond to what would become an even more cataclysmic event.

Such responses could require years of lead time. Some possibilities include spraying a threatening body with dark or light paint so that absorption or reflection of the Sun's rays could cause a deviation of its orbit.

Another suggestion is for a rocketed satellite to be sent to sail alongside the asteroid and by its gravity pull the asteroid just enough aside. This seems quite a challenge since the Cheylabinsk object, just 66 feet in diameter, is estimated to have weighed as much as the Eiffel Tower.

Yet to any given individual, it could be no more deadly than a microscopic nearly weightless corona virus.

Overhead Venus has disappeared though will return in a week transformed into the Morning Star. She will be replaced as the Evening Star by a much dimmer Mercury who will set amid Gemini in the early evenings. On the 19th she'll be cheek-to-cheek with Old Man Moon, but very low in the twilight about a half hour before sunrise.

For early evening and night shift excitement Mars could be spied the 4th in the space between the lonely star Procyon to its left, and Capella in the pentagon of Auriga to its right as evening falls, and then past mid-month rising in Aquarius in the early wee hours. He will move from the left to right of the Moon about daybreak the 12th-13th.

Jupiter and Saturn will be rising starting in the late evenings and ever earlier, Jupiter obviously the brighter and a little later, and will be dancing about the Moon the 8th-9th.

Regulus, the bright star of Leo will move from left to right of the Moon at the coming of the Moon the 24th-25th respectively, and another lonely (for brightness) star, Spica in Virgo, does the same the 28th-29th.

Summer arrives officially with the solstice at 4a44 the 20th, a little earlier on the calendar because of February's extra day. At that time you can know that Hydra will be stretched across the southern horizon. Leo the Lion will be filling a lot of space high up to the south, Orion will still be up, just stepping down at the western horizon while Corvus the Crow will be winging up in the southeast. But no one will see them because of the too bright Sun, even if clouds are missing.

But as evening arrives and night progresses, Scorpius followed by Sagittarius with its Teapot will be brightly visible moving behind the dim departing tail of Hydra, and the long sweep of the Milky Way will be bringing Aquila the Eagle, Cygnus the Swan, and a number of small summer denizens into view while Bootes with its bright star Arcturus leads the Northern Crown followed by Hercules and their companions down the western sky as the season changes.

The Moon will be full the 5th at 2p12, new the 21st at 1a41.

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Seeing

Dru Clarke



“Where he pointed was only a white flower until I saw him seeing it.”

Marilyn Nelson, “*Ruellia Noctiflora*” in *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry* (ed. Camille T.

Each spring as it warms, we walk north on our road with our two dogs. Our destination is the creek, so the round trip is about two miles. The road does a crooked dog’s leg to the east about a third of the way, and we seasonally smell a sweet and musky scent wafting toward us, especially with a southwest breeze blowing. Many times we’ve examined the roadside vegetation on that northeast bend and have never seen blooms. Today, the air moved from the east as we approached the bend, and we were overwhelmed with the perfume. There, in the understory, we found a stand of tall shrubs with glossy, oval leaves and sprigs of cottony white lilac-like flowers: chokecherry was in bloom! The synchrony of the elements of time and space, wind direction, light and our presence unlocked a mystery that had been hidden to us for years. We had looked many times, but without seeing.

Water that spilled over the concrete apron at the creek bifurcated into two gyres, one rotating counterclockwise toward the north, the other, with the floating bottle cap, clockwise toward the south.

We watched the bottle cap trace the surface of the gyre, moving languidly toward us until it encountered the fall of water, where it tumbled in somersaults beneath the flow, then resurfaced as if revived as the current slowed. We watched it make four or five trips, thinking with each sweep that it might get caught up in the north gyre, but it always sailed to the right. An inanimate object propelled by physics, governed by its inherent buoyancy, destined to travel round and round and round, until a different synchrony prevails. The choice did not seem to be the bottle cap’s.

Easily overlooked, a dark lavender chenille blanket of small skullcap has found its ideal “terroir,” a patch of sloping lawn shaded by mature trees. It predictably appears in bloom each April, inconspicuous compared to the prairie violets and henbit that dominate nearby. The mower blade spares all. Does it – the obscure skullcap- provide early nourishment to equally overlooked pollinators critical for later fruits? Clothes and bed linens that dry on the line smell so good that I bury my face in them as I gather them to fold. The air is better now as we shelter and cityscapes are once again visible. It is so quiet that some are hearing birdsong for the first time. Seeing, smelling, hearing: do these senses help us to know, to understand Earth’s workings better? To want to care for it?

Edith Cobb in her *Ecology of the Imagination in Childhood* describes the evolution into human maturity of a “compassionate intelligence”. It seems natural in some, but altogether missing in others.

Nurturing the earlier stages of childhood, when children ‘make the world their own,’ using their senses to explore and discover and question may be essential to this state. Seeing may be the first step.



Prunus virginiana



Photos by Mike Haddock

https://www.kswildflower.org/tree_details.php?treeID=39

Alsop Bird Sanctuary and Butterfly Garden

Photos by Susan Blackford



Alsop Bird Sanctuary



EVOLVING

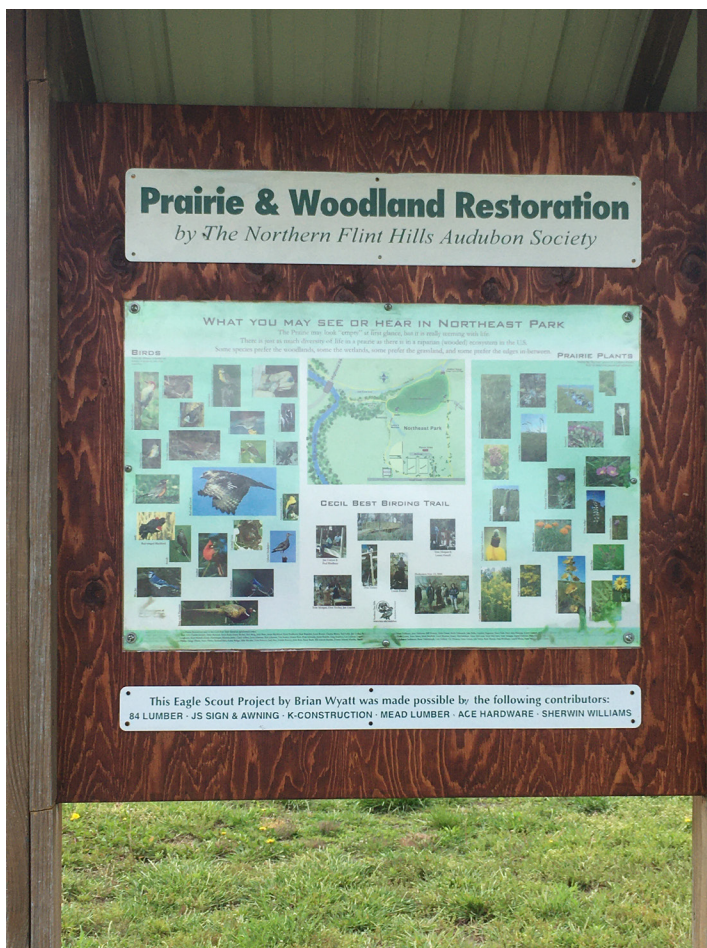


Butterfly Garden, Sojourner Truth Park

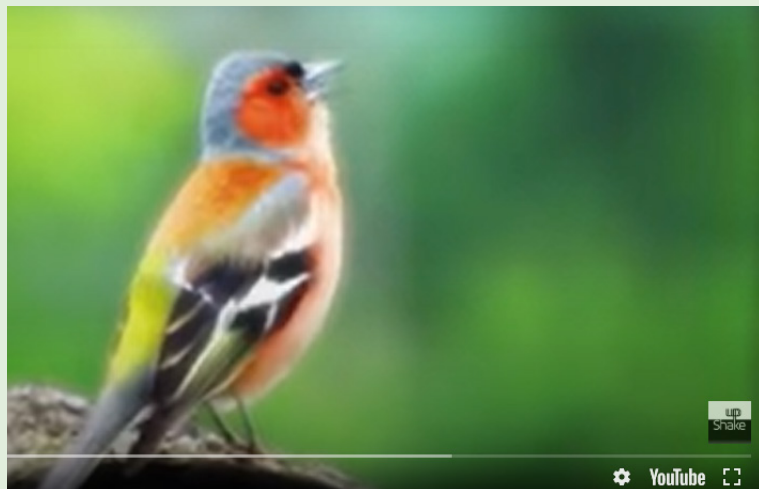


NORTHEAST PRAIRIE

photos by Susan Blackford



Thanks to Kent and Patricia Yeager this kiosk has been repaired and the poster replaced.



Bird Song Opera:

recomposed Mozart's Magic Flute, Papageno/Papagena Duet into an audiovisual bird twitterstorm aria performed by our feathered fellows.



<http://volkerpannes.de/portfolio/bird-song-opera/>



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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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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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