

2nd Annual Backyard Birdfeeder Tour

Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009

Last year's event was so well received we are doing it again!

This year's feeder tour is concentrated around the southern part of Tuttle Creek Lake. Our first stop will provide a nice view of the lake and a breakfast of cinnamon rolls, fresh fruit and coffee or milk. We have four homes plus a couple of birding hot spots on this year's route. Doris Burnett has again welcomed us to end the tour at her home. You don't want to miss the birds or the brunch at Doris' home! All this fun before noon!

Car pooling is necessary and the right thing to do, so we will meet for this purpose at the K-Mart parking lot in the area (Hwy 24, east of the Mall) between True Value and Dry Clean City at 8:00 a.m. This tour is free but reservations are required. Please call Patricia Yeager (best time 3:00p.m.-8:00p.m.) at 776-9593 to make a reservation. We can discuss whether you prefer to be a driver or a rider when your reservation is made. This tour is limited to 35 so please call soon.

Patricia Yeager

NORTHERN Flint Hills Audubon Society,
P.O. Box 1932, MANHATTAN, KS 66505-1932



PRAIRIE falcon

NORTHERN FLINT HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 37, No. 6 ~ FEBRUARY 2009

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OF OUR MOST POPULAR SEEDS

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Upcoming Events:

FEB. 5 - BOARD MEETING 6 p.m.
(TOM & MJ MORGAN HOME)

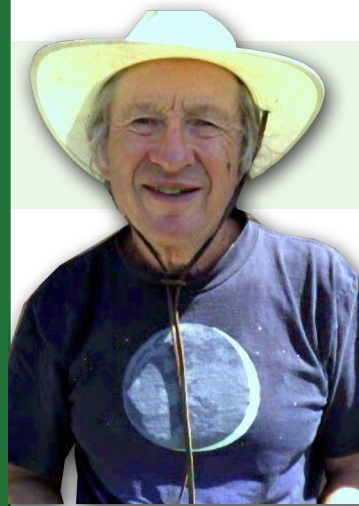
FEB. 7 - ANNUAL BACKYARD BIRDFEEDER TOUR
SEE ABOVE

MAR. 3 - LAST BIRDSEED ORDER DEADLINE
til fall of 2009 -SPECIAL SALE!!

MAR. 5 - BOARD MEETING 6 p.m.
(TOM & MJ MORGAN HOME)

MAR. 7 - CHEYENNE BOTTOMS/QUIVIRA TRIP (pg.7)

MAR. 14 - LAST BIRDSEED PICKUP UFM, 9-12N
til fall of 2009



SKYLIGHT PLUS

PETE COHEN

Though it's the shortest month and already has three generally celebratory days, I think there is appropriately room in February for one more: Fire Day. A winter companion to spring's Earth Day. Through

the breadth of many winters the fire in our stove has been superbly companionable, adding comfort to the ol' rocking chair, and the flames dancing upon their wooden sources have provided ever delighting movements that Salome might have usefully added to her repertoire. These have been rather free-form performances, quite different than the equally unmatchable yet equally enjoyable atmosphere provided by the candle flames with their restrained almost precisely formed waverings that set electrical failings at bay. (If one focuses closely, one can see in the candle flames a kind of Victorian requirement that they all appear in public uniformly with a non-combustible area just above the wick, then a middle mantle of partial combustion surmounted by an area of complete combustion.)

Heraclitus, in what is now Turkey, 2500 years ago, having caught on that the world about is constantly in change, or flux, regarded fire as the basis of it all, for nothing so distinctly, noticeably effects change--re-coloring, re-forming, re-constituting everything it touches. And as we know now, some of it is necessary for the preservation of certain living species.

Apparently humans first got into the ability of awakening it by rubbing wood against wood in one manner or another. I've read that the very isolated Fuegians were among the first to strike it from certain rocks at hand. That ability, as it improved, led to the reciprocal need for fire-fighting equipment and thus a progression of interesting innovations. Calling an uncompanionable person a "plug-ugly" comes from 19th century urban fire-fighting companies sending swift, muscular brutes to capture a city's water hydrant,

or plug, nearest a conflagration before the equipment itself could arrive. The company with the toughest henchmen thus got to connect and get the pay for putting things out.

On a lighter note, I understand there can be created such a thing called a "singing flame," one which issues from a blow-pipe nozzle so that it can slowly then pass up a wide glass tube. Part way up the tube the flame rapidly goes out then rekindles as the heated updraft carries away air that is immediately replaced by a re-igniting downdraft that is intercepted by an updraft, etc., the air vibrations emitting a musical sound. I doubt not, however, that the cracklings coming from our stove are more pleasing.

What is literally high-lighted for your evening pleasure this month particularly includes Venus at its western highest and brightest, a beacon to guide the rising waxing Moon on the 26th, and the two will be side by side on the 27th. Earlier on, the Moon visits the Pleiades on the 3rd; on the 9th-11th the Moon, Saturn, and Leo's bright star, Regulus, will be a traveling companions through the night. On the 17th and 18th the Moon will be passing by Antares in Scorpio in the wee hours.

A light, but not high, will be Mercury eastward briefly in the early dawn. It will be absent by month's end but *The Old Farmer's Almanac* suggests you might see the Moon, Mercury, Jupiter, and Mars, all in a low line just before sunrise on the 22nd.

For something extra on clear evenings, one could look eastward from Orion's belt to the bright star, Procyon (southward below the Gemini Twins), and project eastward to Leo's Regulus, and halfway there one might be able to recognize the keystone gather of stars, two a little brighter than three others, that is the head of Hydra, and follow the Sea Serpent's zig-zag body down to the southeastern horizon. Just above Hydra's head is the nearly invisible constellation of Cancer, the Crab, and by looking SSW from Hydra's head toward Sirius, the eye will pass through the celestial glade where glow dimly the stars of Monoceros the Unicorn.

Moon full the 9th, 8a49, new the 24th, 7p35.

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Chimney Swifts

By Tom & MJ Morgan



CHIMNEY SWIFTS

TOM MORGAN



NFHAS has become interested in nesting habitat of chimney swifts. The following is based on something Tom wrote for the newsletter in 2003, which began to focus the authors' attention on these wonders of the air.

Chimney swifts truly are miracles of adaptation to flying. They eat and drink during flight. They court and sometimes die on the wing in the clear, blue sky. They are fully alive, perhaps, only in the sky, and when evening falls, they must suffer through a dark night before the sun rises and they fly free again with the wind caressing their aerodynamic shape.

This aerodynamic bird has been described as a flying cigar, partly due to a short tail, bluntly squared off, and when darkness falls, that blunt tail is an essential prop as toenails cling to a rough, dark, vertical surface. The sound of rain at night is disheartening, for all the requisite food must be caught on the wing after break of day, but perhaps the storm will dissipate before sunrise; surely it will.

These birds depended on large hollow trees as roosting and nesting locations. Hollow sycamores were particularly attractive sites, but old, hollow sycamores are uncommon, and have been so for some time in which the roughly built chimneys of people's houses provided acceptable nesting sites. The proliferation of chimneys allowed the swift's range to expand into the tallgrass prairie of Kansas, but now the majority of our chimneys are not roughly



built with large openings. Instead most are capped, lined with metal and rather narrow.

The dearth of suitable chimneys has motivated construction of chimney-like towers for the birds.

Our Audubon chapter is considering building one or more towers. One of our members is thinking of having a small tower built in her own yard, but we are most interested in building towers on public land where the swifts may inspire our community with the bird's love of clear skies. Although a site with afternoon shade is best, some information from a nature center in Blue Springs, Missouri, suggests that the towers are most effective placed away from trees, for swifts fear small hawks that perch in trees near the bird feeding area at a nature center. If you have suggestions about suitable sites, designs, or construction personnel please join our discussion! Come to our board meeting or call Tom Morgan or Patricia Yeager.

Fascinating information about the towers can be read on sites such as

<http://www.chimneyswifts.org>

http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Chimney_Swift.html

http://identify.whatbird.com/obj/231/_/Chimney_Swift.aspx



Maybe a redpoll?

You can see it in color on-line (<http://www.k-state.edu/audubon/falcon.html>)

BIRDWATCHER

The Life of Roger Tory Peterson



ELIZABETH J. ROSENTHAL

Can the life and legend of the world's greatest birdwatcher/conservationist be portrayed in a single book? The answer is "yes!" Biographer Elizabeth J. Rosenthal has written a fascinating book about Roger Tory Peterson (RTP) – known to his many colleagues as the "Great Man" or as he preferred "The King Penguin."

Starting with his birth on Aug. 28, 1908 in Jamestown, New York to immigrants (Swedish father and German mother) and continuing until his death in July 28, 1996, the author presents Roger Tory Peterson's life in a straight-forward, honest and easy-to-read manner. Rosenthal has done this through exhaustive research and over a hundred interviews of people from all over the world who knew him. The reader will recognize many of the names and the sixteen pages of photos are a bonus – greatly adding to the story of his life.

The book describes how RTP became a world authority on bird watching, nature study, ecotourism and environmental conservation. Yet his formal education was a H.S. degree

and working his way through art school in the 1920s. His knowledge of birds and nature was gained largely through self-education, a huge dose of self-determination and a love (some would say obsession) of the subject.

Especially noteworthy are: personal and family matters (he had three wives), his relationship with the National Audubon Society; his life as an artist, author and conservation leader (i.e., the DDT battle); and his "worldwide progeny," disciples that have followed his footsteps.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and consider it well worth reading for any person interested in the natural world and those who have contributed to our knowledge of it. By the end of the book the reader feels like he/she knew the "Great Man" personally.

BIRDWATCHER, The Life of Roger Tory Peterson, published by Lyons Press, 2008, review by Gary Jeffrey Elizabeth Rosenthal, www.petersonbird.com

THANKS

THANKS to all who participated in the Manhattan Christmas Bird Count 2008, and to all who shared their wonderful food at the compilation dinner. Special thanks to Kevin Fay, Patricia Yeager, Madonna Stallmann and the Oviatt's for helping with the clean-up. *Carla Bishop*

THANK YOU, Carla Bishop, for organizing and coordinating the dinner year after year.

LOST AND FOUND: A tan neck scarf was left at the Senior Service Center the night of the Christmas Bird Count supper (December 20). If it belongs to you, please contact Carla Bishop at 532-1858 (w), 539-5129 (h), or cbishop@ksu.edu to arrange a return.



Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Bird Seed Sale

ORDERS must be received by Mar.3, 2009

PICK UP is Saturday, Mar. 14, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

UFM, 1221 Thurston, Manhattan

If interested in helping unload the truck, come at 8 a.m., or volunteer to help during the morning of pickup - contact Annie (below).

Return your order forms with your checks to:

**Annie Baker
116 Parkview Dr.
Junction City, KS 66441
Phone 785-375-4633**

**Make checks payable to:
Northern Flint Hills
Audubon Society
or NFHAS for short**

Bird Seed Sale Product Descriptions:

BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEEDS are attractive to more species of birds than are striped sunflower seeds.

They also supply more energy per pound than striped sunflower seeds.

STRIPED SUNFLOWER SEEDS contain larger hearts than black oil sunflower seeds and are particularly suitable for larger songbirds.

SAFFLOWER is a favorite with Cardinals and squirrels really do not like it.

MILLET is liked by Mourning Doves, Song Sparrows, White Throated Sparrows, Fox Sparrows, White Crown Sparrows, Red Wing Blackbirds, House Finches, Pine Siskins, and Quail.

FLINT HILLS FEAST is our premium bird seed mix: 30 % black oil sunflower seed, 20 % striped sunflower seed, and 50 % white proso millet with no milo or fillers.

NIGER THISTLE is very attractive to gold finches and all other finches that are here over the winter. Niger is excellent for tube feeders.

SUNFLOWER SEED CHIPS are high in energy and can be used in tube feeders. These are especially liked by pine siskins.

CHEAP CHEEP MIX is less expensive but still attractive to many species. It is 40 % cracked corn, 40 % white proso millet, 20 % black oil sunflower and no milo or fillers.

SUPER FORMULA FINCH MIX is a less expensive option for tube feeders than 100% Niger thistle. It consists of 70% sunflower chips and 30% niger thistle. This is very popular with most tube feeding species.

SUET CAKES, in addition to having high calorie beef fat which helps birds maintain body heat in cold winter months as the main ingredient, have other nutritious ingredients.

PEANUT PICKOUTS are chunks of peanut hearts and are very attractive to woodpeckers.

MEDIUM CHOP is chopped corn kernels- especially good for ground-feeding birds.

Quality Seed, Easy Handling

The products we offer are high quality seeds. Our mixes were created to satisfy the needs of local bird populations at reasonable costs. We have tried to make it easy for you to purchase the amount of seed you want without having to handle heavy, awkward bags. Our seed comes in 10, 25, and 50 pound bags. We try to obtain the seed in paper bags whenever possible.

Sales Support Local Chapter Activities

As with all of our fund-raising activities, proceeds from our seed and store sales go toward supporting the educational and conservation projects of the local chapter. All of our labor is voluntary. Taxes are included in the price of our seed. Even though we are a not-for-profit organization, we are required to pay tax on any retail sales. Any additional donation you may wish to include with your order is appreciated.

Check out the reduced prices of some of our most popular seeds!

PICK UP - Sat., Mar. 14, 2009 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at UFM, 1221 Thurston

DESCRIPTION	SIZE		COST EACH	QTY	TOTAL COST
Sunflower chips	10lb		\$14.00		
Sunflower chips	25lb		\$32.00		
Sunflower chips	50lb	(Sale)	\$52.00		
Corn on the cob	10lb		\$6.25		
Corn on the cob	25lb		\$12.00		
Finch Mix	10lb		\$16.25		
Finch Mix	25lb		\$32.50		
Finch Mix	50lb	(Sale)	\$65.00		
Med. corn chop	25lb		\$10.50		
Med. corn chop	50lb		\$19.00		
Peanut pick-outs	10lb		\$15.25		
Peanut pick-outs	25lb	(Sale)	\$28.25		
Red Millet	10lb		\$8.00		
Red Millet	25lb		\$16.25		
Red Millet	50lb		\$29.25		
Safflower seed	10lb		\$11.25		
Safflower seed	25lb		\$26.00		
Safflower seed	50lb	(Sale)	\$40.00		
Suet cakes <small>peanut butter, berry,</small>	11oz		\$1.50		
Suet cakes <small>or regular</small>	11oz		\$1.50		
Sunflower (black)	10lb		\$6.75		
Sunflower (black)	25lb		\$15.75		
Sunflower (black)	50lb	(Sale)	\$24.00		
Sunflower (striped)	10lb		\$7.25		
Sunflower (striped)	25lb		\$18.75		
Sunflower (striped)	50lb	(Sale)	\$30.00		
Thistle seed	10lb		\$21.00		
Thistle seed	25lb	(Sale)	\$37.50		
White millet	10lb		\$4.25		
White millet	25lb		\$10.50		
White millet	50lb		\$19.25		
Cheap cheep mix	10lb		\$5.00		
Cheap cheep mix	25lb		\$11.75		
Cheap cheep mix	50lb		\$21.75		
Flint Hills feast	10lb		\$6.00		
Flint Hills feast	25lb		\$14.50		
Flint Hills feast	50lb		\$27.50		
Super Finch mix	10lb		\$16.25		
Super Finch mix	25lb	(Sale)	\$31.50		

For our customers in **Manhattan (IN-TOWN only)** we offer a local delivery service — please check the box below and include \$5.00 with your order. Thank you for your order and your support. **We need volunteers to help the day of pickup - if interested - contact Annie Baker - (address & phone on front of form).**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE # _____

Email _____

☐ DELIVERY (in-town) \$5.00

SUBTOTAL _____

DONATION _____

TOTAL _____

TAKE NOTE



SAVE THE DATES:

FEB. 7 - 2ND ANNUAL BACKYARD BIRDFEEDER TOUR
(SEE FRONT PG)

FEB. 13-16, 2009 - GREAT BACKYARD BIRD

COUNT: 12th annual Count - project of Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon. Anyone can participate, from beginning birders to experts. It takes a little as 15 minutes on one day or count for as long as you like each day of the event. Free, fun, easy. Visit <http://www.birdcount.org> for more information.

MARCH 7TH - TRIP TO QUIVIRA & CHEYENNE BOTTOMS.

Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society is once again organizing a birdwatching trip to Quivira National Wildlife Refuge and Cheyenne Bottoms, scheduled for Saturday, March 7. We will try a different route this year and head for Quivira first. The tentative plans are to leave Manhattan at 8:30 a.m., travel to Sterling, Kansas for lunch, tour the Quivira refuge and then to Cheyenne Bottoms for sunset viewing of birds. Plans are to stop in Salina for supper and then home, hopefully by 8:30 p.m. If you are planning to join us, contact Carla Bishop at 785-532-1858(w), 785-539-5129(h), or cbishop@ksu.edu by Feb. 27, so appropriate transportation can be arranged. Don't forget to dress in layers, because the weather is always iffy in March and breezes are cold coming off the water. Bring your binoculars, snacks, and water, too. Last year, we saw lots of pelicans, coots, buffleheads, shovelers, herons, Canada geese, snow geese, and four Tundra swans. No sandhill cranes in view but we did hear them. Hope you can join us this year.

MAY 9: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

COUNT, Jim Throne, jim.throne@sbcglobal.net more information in April issue of the Prairie Falcon

E-NEWSLETTER: If you wish to opt out of the "paper" Prairie Falcon newsletter and get it on-line as a pdf - send your name and email address to Jacque Staats - staats@bri.ksu.edu - then visit our website - <http://www.k-state.edu/audubon/falcon.html> and click on "Current issue" and see it in color!



The NFHAS Board has initiated an annual donation of birdseed to several Nursing Homes in the Manhattan area (including Westmoreland, Wamego, Junction City, Leonardville and Wakefield).



NORTHERN FLINT HILLS
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Also available on-line at www.ksu.edu/audubon/falcon.html

Subscription Information: Introductory memberships - \$20/yr., then basic membership is \$35/yr. When you join the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of the National Audubon Society and receive the bimonthly Audubon magazine in addition to the Prairie Falcon newsletter. New membership applications may be sent to Treasurer, NFHAS, P.O. Box 1932, Manhattan, KS 66505-1932. Make checks payable to the National Audubon Society. Membership renewals are handled by the National Audubon Society and should not be sent to the NFHAS. Questions about membership? Call 1-800-274-4201 or email the National Audubon Society join@audubon.org.

If you do not want to receive the national magazine, but still want to be involved in our 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, 66502-1932.

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.

NFHAS Board

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Contacts for Your Elected Representatives (anytime) Write, call or email:

Governor Kathleen Sebelius: 2nd Floor, State Capital Bldg., Topeka, KS 66612.

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