



EAGLE DAYS AT TUTTLE CREEK - JAN. 3, 9-12NOON

The program is free and open to the public. All participants are asked to meet at 9 a.m. in the large assembly room at the Manhattan fire station located at 2000 Denison (the corner of Denison and Kimball). At that time, Dan Mulhern, a biologist with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, will offer a short presentation on the nesting habits of bald eagles in Kansas. A second presentation will then feature a discussion of eagles and other raptors.

Following the two presentations at the fire station, members of the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society will take participants on a bus tour through the area downstream of Tuttle Creek Dam, with the goal of watching bald eagles in the wild. All participants should dress appropriately for the weather. Everyone is encouraged to bring binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras.

Eagle Day 2009 is sponsored by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Sponsors of the bus service for the program include the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society and the Manhattan Convention and Visitors Bureau. For more information, contact Steve Prockish at the Corps of Engineers office at (785) 539-8511 ext. 3167.

Also, EAGLE Days, Milford Lake Nature Center, Jan 19-20, 2009, 785-238-5714

NORTHERN FLINT HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY,
P.O. Box 1972, MANHATTAN, KS 66505-1972



PRAIRIE FALCON

NORTHERN FLINT HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

Vol. 37, No. 5 ~ JANUARY 2009

Inside

- pg. 2 - SkyliGht plus
PETE COHEN
- pg. 3 - BirdSleuth PROJECT
- pg. 4 - PHOTOS
- pg. 5-6 BirdSEED ORDER FORM
- pg. 7 - TAKE NOTE

Upcoming Events:

- JAN. 3 - Eagle Days, Tuttle Creek Lake 9-12N
- JAN. 6 - BirdSEED ORDER DEADLINE
- JAN. 8 - BOARD MEETING 6 p.m.
(Tom & MJ Morgan Home)
- JAN. 10 - eBird Workshop 8-12N
Washburn Rural Middle School
5620 SW 61st St. Topeka
- JAN. 17 - BirdSEED PICKUP UFM, 9-12N
- FEB. 5 - BOARD MEETING 6 p.m.
(Tom & MJ Morgan Home)
- FEB. 7 - ANNUAL BACKYARD BIRDFEEDER TOUR (pg.7)



SKYLIGHT PLUS

PETE COHEN

Some readers may have noticed in November a certain New York Times piece reprinted in the Manhattan Mercury. The post-election article reported that, nationwide, despite the economic crisis, voters had approved 67 out of 82 proposals for new spending on parks and open space preservation, totaling \$7.3 billion. How loudly to cheer might depend on an examination of what was approved or not, and just how much is \$7 billion amid all the vast money amounts in the news, especially since \$5 billion of that 7 seemed attributable to Minnesota, to be committed over a 25-year period. Nonetheless, straight on, it is a lot of dough.

And worth noting is that the approvals reportedly came evenly from rural Republican districts and areas that lean Democratic. I'm reminded of how often--when armchair reading has led me to the writings of those who were living through the hardships and perils of the wilderness frontier--I would nonetheless come upon ecstatic descriptions of viewscapes, wildflowers, etc. By 1820 James Fenimore Cooper and others were crying out against the spoilation of the eastern forests. And it was only 1872 -- when our West must've seemed much vaster, when the day of the cattleman and prospector was in full swing, and the railroads were recruiting far and wide for people to come plow because "rain follows the plow"-- that the Yellowstone plateau was set aside for preservation and two troops of cavalry sent to protect it. There has been, and apparently still is, a gene pool among us of those who feel a joy in natural surroundings.

This gives me an opportunity of referring to another news story, one I found in a newspaper's archives when I was a reporter in Wyoming. From the gray, stiffened paper I learned that the Congressional delegation that came by steamboat, then shifted into saddles to inspect our first national park, encountered on one of their first mornings amassed rebellion by the packhorses who with snorts and thumps unloaded their equipment helter-skelter about the countryside. They consoled themselves with having had the Congressional wisdom to delegate their whisky and ammo supply to two loyal donkeys who stayed staid. However they had a fright several days later when the business of getting the re-captured packhorses to ford a cold and swift mountain stream had occupied the full attention of themselves and their hostlers combined. Chilled and wet upon the other side, they discovered their two crucial bearers missing. This dreadful emptiness lasted least several minutes, until the independent-minded creatures re-appeared, without a damp hair showing, and it was discovered that by going a little distance upstream the two had found a deadfall long enough and broad enough to cross dry-hoofed.

The story went on, reporting, among other things, how in the rugged country lameness befell several of the horses and one of the donkeys, forcing the inspectors down to essentials, which included the ammunition. So some of the whiskey supply had to be set aside, abandoned and unopened. One can wonder if it is still there, or what went on in the mind of the wilderness wanderer who may have discovered it. But surely if there had been enough Congressmen on that expedition there would now be aloft an official constellation named for a donkey.

As is we'll have to make do in the evening hours this month with the brightly traditional dog up on his hind legs, the long-horned bull glaring down from his shoulders forward, and the giant hunter displaying his weapons between them, while Lepus, the Rabbit, leaps away beneath his feet. and the Gemini Twins languish along behind. Cassiopeia will be clearly in her rocking chair amid the Milky Way close to the northwestern horizon with the Big Dipper opposite in the northeast. not far from where Leo the Lion (carrying Saturn along) will be arriving to escort these actors off the stage to make room for the pale maiden Virgo, the kite-shaped plowman Bootes, and the crunched cube of Corvus, the Crow, among others in the wee hours (along with the Quadrantid meteor shower on the 4th).

Jupiter and dimmer Mercury will be hanging around briefly low in the western twilight during the month's first week while glowing Venus stays up ever longer above them, not setting till after 9 by month's end. Mars is absent. Moon full the 10th at 9p27, new the 26th at 1a55.

© 2009 Peter Zachary Cohen

*Ithaca, NY--*Why is that crow chasing a hawk? Do birds

fly away from noisy places? How long will an American Robin spend pulling a worm from the ground? The BirdSleuth curriculum from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is all about tapping into a child's natural curiosity to answer scientific questions in a fun way. The just-released revision of the Exploring Bird Behavior module offers educators even more lessons, posters, and multimedia resources. The new student toolkit comes with two important tools for collecting behavioral information about birds: a BirdSleuth stopwatch and tally counter.

"Kids love to work with gadgets," says BirdSleuth project leader Jennifer Fee. "Give them a stopwatch or put them in a lab coat, and they transform into little scientists. And then it becomes easier to explain tricky concepts, such as the difference between a behavioral event and a behavioral state." (An event can be counted; a state can be timed.)

This module also comes with a DVD showing bird behaviors most students have never seen, including stunning slow-motion video of the exotic courtship dance of the Greater Sage-Grouse. A 32-page teacher's guide includes step-by-step instructions for completing all six lessons, or "investigations."

The Exploring Bird Behavior module, like the others in the BirdSleuth series, engages students in inquiry by building lessons and activities around citizen-science projects from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. This module uses the Crows Count project. Students count crows and their relatives (ravens, magpies, and jays), observe their behaviors, and report what they see to the Cornell Lab where scientists are studying the dynamics of group behavior in crows.

"BirdSleuth gets kids interested in nature, gets them outside, and teaches them to think more critically," says Fee. "They ask questions, collect data, look for patterns and evidence, test ideas, make conclusions, and share results."

To learn more about the new Exploring Bird Behavior module and about the entire BirdSleuth curriculum, visit www.birds.cornell.edu/BirdSleuth.edu. The staff is happy to answer any questions about how to make BirdSleuth a welcome supplement to your existing science curriculum.

Contact: Jennifer Fee, Project Leader, (607) 254-2403, jms327@cornell.edu



The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a membership institution dedicated to interpreting and conserving the earth's biological diversity through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds. Visit the Lab's web site at www.birds.cornell.edu.

KDWP Winter Bird Feeder Survey, Jan. 10-13, <http://www.ksbirds.org/KWBFS.htm>

EAGLE Days, Milford Lake Nature Center, Jan 19-20, 2009, 785-238-5714

Great Backyard Bird Count, Feb. 23-26 - <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>

More events around the state: <http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/KDWP-Info>

WINTER SCENES
PHOTOS OF OUR BACKYARD
GARY JEFFREY



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Sphyrapicus varius



Can you identify this
bird?



Red-bellied Woodpecker
Melanerpes carolinus

This year NFHAS expanded its bird seed sales from three opportunities to four, spanning October to March. Through our bird seed fundraiser, we are proud to provide quality seed at reasonable cost. If you know of a friend or family member who would like to join our bird seed order form mailing list, please provide Annie Baker with their name and address. Mail to: 116 Parkview Dr., Junction City, KS, 66441, or call 785-375-4633.

Special thanks to volunteers who helped with the October and December seed pickup, Carla Bishop, Walter Dodds, Kevin Fay, Jacque Staats, Dick Oberst, and Patricia Yeager.

Thank you for your support,
Annie Baker, Birdseed Chair



Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society Bird Seed Sale

ORDERS must be received by Jan. 6, 2009

PICK UP is Saturday, Jan. 17, 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.

PICK UP - Saturday, Jan. 17, 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	\$62.00		
Corn on the cob	10lb	\$6.25		
Corn on the cob	25lb	\$12.00		
Finch Mix	10lb	\$16.25		
Finch Mix	25lb	\$38.50		
Finch Mix	50lb	\$75.00		
Med. corn chop	25lb	\$10.50		
Med. corn chop	50lb	\$19.00		
Peanut pick-outs	10lb	\$15.25		
Peanut pick-outs	25lb	\$34.25		
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	\$50.00		
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	\$30.00		
Sunflower (striped)	10lb	\$7.25		
Sunflower (striped)	25lb	\$18.75		
Sunflower (striped)	50lb	\$36.00		
Thistle seed	10lb	\$21.00		
Thistle seed	25lb	\$47.50		
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	\$37.50		

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 DATE: FEB 7, 2009

2nd Annual Backyard Birdfeeder Tour, Patricia Yeager, coordinator. Last year's event was so well received we are doing it again! Join us this year for breakfast and birds. More details in the Feb. issue of the newsletter.

eBIRD WORKSHOP

A real-time, online checklist program, launched in 2002 by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society. eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution. It's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of observations by recreational and professional bird watchers.

**A WORKSHOP FOR USING THIS ONLINE DATA RESOURCES IS BEING HELD FROM 8-12NOON ON JAN 10, 2009
WASHBURN RURAL MIDDLE SCHOOL, 5620 SW 61ST ST., TOPEKA**

This workshop shows you the intuitive and simple web interface. Learn how to submit observations or view results through interactive queries of the eBird database. The workshop also shows you the internet tools needed to maintain your own bird records and use interactive maps, graphs and bar charts. A birder enters when, where and how they went birding, fills out a checklist of all the birds seen and heard that day (or trip).

This workshop is for anyone from first time birders to science students and dedicated birders. For more information call 785-232-4128 or email ebirdwshop2009@sbcglobal.net. Check out the eBird website: www.ebird.org. Here you can see great photos and what others have submitted from all over.

WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU

Got a good birding story/encounter? Please share it with us - in "Bird Tales!" Send me your "tales" photos welcome and anything else you think our members would like to see in the newsletter -- e-mail cinraney@ksu.edu, or mail them to me at 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520





NORTHERN FLINT HILLS
Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1932
MANHATTAN, KS
66505-1932

PRINTED ON 100% POST-CONSUMER
RECYCLED PAPER

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT No. 662
MANHATTAN, KS 66502

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Published monthly (except August) by the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society.
Edited by Cindy Jeffrey, 15850 Galilee Rd., Olsburg, KS 66520. (cinraney@ksu.edu)
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

President:	Patricia Yeager	776-9593
Vice Pres.	MJ Morgan	
Secretary:	Annie Baker	375-4633
Treasurer:	Carla Bishop	539-5129

COMMITTEE chairs:

Membership:	Jacque Staats	staats@bri.ksu.edu	537-3664
Programs:	Kevin Fay		
Conservation:			
Northeast Park	Jacque Staats		
Butterfly Garden	Susan Blackford		
Education:			
Land Preservatin			
Bird Seed Sales:	Annie Baker		375-4633
Newsletter	Cindy Jeffrey	cinraney@ksu.edu	468-3587
Fieldtrips:	Patricia Yeager, Kevin Fay		776-9593
At-large:	Tom Morgan, MJ Morgan		
Audubon of Kansas Trustee:	Hoogy Hoogheem		

Contacts for Your Elected Representatives (anytime) Write, call or email @
Governor Kathleen Sebelius: 2nd Floor, State Capital Bldg., Topeka , KS 66612. Kansas 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. or Brownback <Brownback@senate.gov> U.S. Capital Switchboard 202-224-3121. President G.W. Bush - The White House, Washington, DC 20500.