



the prairie falcon

Vol. 33, No.11
JULY 2005

NORTHERN FLINT HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY, P.O. Box 1932, MANHATTAN, KS 66505-1932

No PROGRAMS:
July AND AUGUST
NEXT NEWSLETTER:
SEPT. 2005



Range of the ivory-billed woodpecker in 1885.
Map credit: The Nature Conservancy
Source: The Ivory-billed Woodpecker, by James T. Tanner,
published in 1942 by the National Audubon Society

Digital image of ivory-billed woodpecker
at nest. Credit: George M. Sutton/
Cornell Lab of Ornithology



(See bottom of page 2 and 3 for more information)

Shrinking U.S. range of the ivory-billed woodpecker.
Map credit: The Nature Conservancy
Source: The Ivory-billed Woodpecker, by James T. Tanner,
published in 1942 by the National Audubon Society.

Summer Birding

Our beginning birding activities this summer are in conjunction with Adventure Outback. Richard Pitts runs this camp and on July 9th, and July 23rd, Judy Roe (and anyone else who is interested) will introduce these children to birding. **Call Judy Roe, 539-5519 or email her at jroe@ksu.edu TO HELP with this great educational opportunity.**

INSIDE

- 2 MINUTEMAN PROJECT
- 2 IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER
- 3 MOTHERHOOD ON THE PRAIRIE
- 4 SKYLIGHT
- 7 TAKE NOTE
- YOUTH WRITING CONTEST

CONTRIBUTORS:

- PETE COHEN
- TRICIA GERRODETTE
- THOMAS MORGAN
- JUDY ROE
- DAN YOCKEY
- CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY

UPCOMING DATES:

- July 9 **Birding with Children**
Adventure Outback
(Judy Roe, 539-5519
jroe@ksu.edu)
- July 23 **Birding with Children**
Adventure Outback
(Judy Roe, 539-5519
jroe@ksu.edu)
- AUGUST - SUMMER HIATUS - NO PROGRAM
OR NEWSLETTER
- SEPT YEAR BEGINS WITH A SPECIAL
Field Trip

PRINTED BY
CLAFLIN BOOKS & COPIES
MANHATTAN, KS



Minuteman Project

P.O. Box 63
Sierra Vista, AZ 85636
Colleagues,

Huachuca Audubon Society is writing to you to bring a serious local conservation issue to your attention and ask for your help in publicizing it. Many of your members will have seen the recent national publicity on the “Minuteman Project”, in Cochise County along the Arizona border with Mexico. Most of the attention was on the social and potential national security issues involved with illegal immigration across this border. Very little, if any, attention was directed towards the severe environmental consequences experienced here at “ground zero”.

Biologically, Cochise County is rich and diverse, combining a cottonwood-willow riparian corridor, rare in the Southwest, with semi-desert grasslands, then rising through oak forests to montane zone conifer-clad peaks. We are home to the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA), a globally important migration corridor for millions of birds each year and one of The Nature Conservancy’s “Last Great Places”; several “sky island” ranges, including the Huachuca Mountains, home to Miller Peak Wilderness and world renown Ramsey Canyon Preserve; and the National Park Service’s Coronado National Memorial.

All of these resources are being severely degraded by the heavy human traffic, which has much more personally important priorities than concern for our environment. New and inappropriate trails are worn in the landscape. Switchbacks are cut in existing trails. Literally tons of trash are left on the landscape, distressing the human eye and psyche and threatening the lives of local wildlife. In addition, fires set deliberately or by accident are taking an increasing toll on habitat. Tens of thousands of acres have burned in human caused fires in the last few years. Since much of the travel is at night, many animal species seem to be declining, possibly due to the invasion of what used to be “low impact time” as well as space.

Unfortunately, one of the ironies is that some of the U.S. Border Patrol’s proposed solutions (fences, roads and authorization to take ORV’s into wilderness) to the problem may end up doing as much damage as the illegal entrants themselves.

We ask that you publicize our under-reported problem to your membership and bring it to the attention of your congressional representatives. It is only when there is a national solution that the severe degradation of this sensitive area will be contained. If businesses and individuals in your area who hire illegal aliens were held accountable under current laws, the demand for these workers would decrease to the point that our damaged environment might have a chance to recover.

Thank you for your attention and action.
Tricia Gerrodette
President, Huachuca Audubon Society, Arizona

“REDISCOVERY” of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker

continued from page 1

The search for the ivory-billed woodpecker was launched in March 2004 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, The Nature Conservancy and individuals already involved in effort. The search team included more than 50 employees, contractors and volunteers, most of whom spent up to 14 hours a day in canoes looking for the bird in the swampy bayous of eastern Arkansas. The search team has – for the most part – been based in camps at the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, where the initial and all subsequent sightings occurred, and at the White River National Wildlife Refuge. So far, more than \$10 million has been raised to fund the search and acquire habitat critical to the survival of the ivory-bill. Other individuals and agencies involved in the search include: Oakwood College in Huntsville, Ala., Louisiana State University, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Birdman Productions, LLC, and Civic Enterprises, LLC.

VIEWS OF MOTHERHOOD ON THE KONZA PRAIRIE

mj & tom morgan



HIS VIEW:

On July 11th on the Konza Prairie, the strong south wind blew our hair from our foreheads, as we gazed at undulating waves of grasses on the slope below us. Much closer to our toes, we noticed a patch of Missouri evening primrose with large, flat, seed pods that had fallen from their mothers' grasps. I watched a pod as it tumbled a few inches, and imagined a dark night with a real windstorm that would tumble the pods down the steep slope, releasing their seeds.

After we started back to follow the circuitous trail, we saw a white-tailed doe standing in the shade of trees several yards below an outcropping of limestone. A fawn materialized, galloping down and positioning himself beneath the doe. This large, but still speckled, fawn nursed with his head angled up to his sustenance. After a few swallows, he butted her, ramming into the source of sustenance forcefully with a demanding impatience and no consideration for discomfort. The mother maintained a curved arch in her back with a seeming awareness of slight discomfort. And then she felt it was sufficient. She walked forward, breaking contact with the fawn's demanding mouth. She nibbled at nearby plants. With the fawn's fixation on her over, he became aware of us. He inhaled our scent and swiveled his ears to focus on every whisper. When he had drunk in sufficient impressions, he rejoined his mother, who washed his ears with her tongue. Perhaps she was washing the ears free of milk, free of traces which might have become malodorous. And then she washed the back of his neck, which was covered on top with darker hair bordered by a white stripe on the sides of his neck.

HER VIEW:

My husband and I watched a doe and fawn moving slowly about a humming, heat-scented clearing. We had seen the doe first as she stretched her long neck down to the base of the grasses. Her sleek, red-brown body arrested us: no, we weren't alone on the slope of prairie that ran raggedly up to limestone outcroppings. As we delighted in her beauty, a trembling movement above her caught my eye. Down came the fawn, nervously bounding on stick-like legs unshaped as yet by the sinuous muscles of adulthood. Teetering, tottering, somehow even sideways galloping, he launched himself at her. They blended together in patchy patterns of sunlight, the doe tolerating, the fawn demanding.

The doe decided the session was over. She ambled off among the trees that dappled her with shadow. She seemed to be waiting. The fawn was fifty yards behind her, entranced with us, staring with eyes and ears wide, drinking in traces of our presence. Would anything ever again be as focused, as intense? Then the red-brown form, spattered with white spots that resembled dappled patterns of sunlight, ran up again to his mother, and she began to lick his face and head. What information was imparted by her tongue as it caressed his warm-brown hairs? Perhaps it was touch-teaching: the oldest and finest teaching there is. With a young fawn, it is true that a doe may lick traces of milk from the fawn's face and head to protect it from predators that might pick up the scent. A doe may also continue licking an older fawn to communicate dominance, as deer sometimes do, especially older male deer, through rituals of licking around the face and neck. My thought at this moment was simply this, however. She loved him.

© 2005 MJ & Thomas Morgan



Gene Sparling, a kayaker who first saw the ivory-billed woodpecker, continues to search for the bird in the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, Arkansas. August 2004. Photo credit: Mark Godfrey/The Nature Conservancy

AWESOME WEBSITES TO SEE IMAGES OF AN IVORY BILLED WOODPECKER, OLD FILM CLIPS, NEW VIDEO AND READ ABOUT THE "NON-EXTINCTION."

<http://audubon.org/bird/ivory/challenges.php>

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/ivory/>

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/ivory/#>

<http://www.ivorybill.org>



For the past two months I've been referring to some of the responses people have put forth in trying to understand the ways and means of clouds – those items that so noticeably mingle influence with evanescence. From the anciently-rooted ying-yang approach, to the 1802 inspiration of Luke Howard that gave us the descriptive names by which we talk about clouds today, those responses have been basically related verbally. There are other media, and it's possible that clouds have engendered interesting and germane responses expressed musically. Lyall Watson has brought artists into the picture.

The subtitle of his book, *Heaven's Breath* (Morrow, 1984), is "A Natural History of the Wind," though he deals with the atmosphere in general. In a chapter on perceptions he notes that prehistoric art is largely confined to animate figures and geometric or abstract forms, and that in Europe, at least, landscape painting (including clouds) as an exercise in realism, didn't appear till the Renaissance, beginning with painters like Jacopo Tintoretto in the 1500s and extending particularly to John Constable in Luke Howard's day. Watson then tells of a climatologist, Hubert Lamb, and an even more energetic meteorologist, Hans Neuberger, who analyzed 200 and 1200 paintings, respectively, done between 1400 and 1950. They rated the depictions of the sky for blueness, clarity, cloudiness (and wind activity suggested), and concluded that a record of the climate variability through those years could be discerned from the way the various artists drew and colored their world. Revealed, according to the analysts, are the onset and easing of the Little Ice Age that came upon Europe at some time in the Middle Ages, and Watson dates the start of that Age at 1550, within the period for which the paintings were rated. However, this conflicts with other information I've read that puts significant cooling starting as early as the 1200s. Perhaps it's a question of defining "start."

The same question could apply to the Perseid meteor shower whose sparklers could begin showing in mid-July and keep winking-in till late in August, but will peak late in the evening of August 11th until dawn. Though the Moon yields to the Perseids this

year, it comes back strong on July 21st, full and at perigee (its closest approach to Earth), so the tides will be exceptionally high and low then, and not far different at the full of August 19th when it will be almost at perigee.

In *A Skywatcher's Year* (Cambridge, 1999) Jeff Kanipe reminds that the Summer Triangle will be available again, i.e.: Deneb, the tail star of Cygnus the Swan (the large cross flying southward in the Milky Way), and Altair, the bright star in the triangular Aquila the Eagle, eastward of the Swan's head, and Vega, bright blue in the tiny pan-like cluster equally westward of the Swan's head (the star known as Albireo). This is a handy locator in the sky. A line from Deneb to Vega passes on to the keystone of stars at the center of Hercules; while one from Altair through Vega soon reaches the head of Draco the Dragon, whose body winds between the Big and Little Bears; a third line, from Altair through Deneb finds Cepheus the King, the faint but sizeable arrangement in front of Cassiopeia's chair, that resembles a dunce-cap, or small steep-roofed house, take your pick; fourthly, going from Vega through Deneb you meet the point of contact between the Great Square of Pegasus and the northeasterly sweep of Andromeda, a star named Alpheratz.

The *Old Farmer's Almanac* and *StarDate* in combination – signposts in print – say that the Moon will be above Venus above Mercury in the twilight of July 8th and will move on to be near Regulus in Leo on the 9th. It will be in a W-SW line with Jupiter and Spica the 11th, then will pass in front of Antares in Scorpio the 17th, and be up at 1 a.m. and to the right of Mars the 27th, then up about 11 p.m. and to the upper left of Mars on August 24th. Venus should be found near Regulus in the twilight of July 22nd, and begins to rise ever closer to Jupiter each night (to get very close on September 2nd). It will be below the Moon below Jupiter August 8th. Mercury will be very close to Venus in the twilight of July 1st, then ESE in the dawning sky below Saturn, with Sirius off to the right August 23rd, and show beneath the waning Moon on the 31st. New Moons, July 6th (7a02), August 4th (10p05); Full, July 21st (6am.), August 19th (12p53).



Youth Writing Contest

The Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society is sponsoring a writing contest for youth **up to and including 8th Grade**. Young writers from all over Kansas are encouraged to enter. The subject is **“My Favorite Bird of Summer”** We would like to know a little about the habitat of your favorite bird and why you like this special one. The top three entries will be rewarded (1st place \$50, trophy, Birding Guidebook, NFHAS T-shirt, 2nd Place \$30 and Birding Guidebook, NFHAS T-shirt, 3rd Place \$20, Birding Guidebook and NFHAS T-shirt)

LENGTH: At least one full page - no longer than two pages, typed or hand-written.

DEADLINE: Nov. 1, 2005.

Winners will be announced at the December Manhattan Christmas Bird Count Chilli Supper. In addition, the winning composition will be read that evening, and published in the January “Prairie Falcon” newsletter and selected newspapers.

Send entries to:

Don Yockey
17300 Cannonball Rd.
Wamego, Kansas 66547

Photo by Dave Rintoul



Migratory Bird Count Lament judy roe

Where will the grasshopper sparrows go?

For several years, our migratory bird count team has polished off a beautiful morning along Wildcat Creek with a sweep of a ranchland area on a hill above Manhattan. We knew it had been sold for development and slowly the houses have edged up the hill year by year. This year, as we approached the crest, there they were – the machines. They had started to lay pipe atop the hill and soon will convert the grassland to manicured lawns that grasshopper sparrows do not call home, as they did for so long in the abandoned cow pasture. Where will they go? I’ve only rarely seen one, but have heard their insect buzz-like call many times, alerted by my talented birdwatching companions. And the lark sparrows, and the green heron in the pond? Where will they go? We likely won’t count any next year, I imagine sadly. I can just hope that a few of the quiet steep canyons will be too difficult to bulldoze and that the black and white warblers will have a spot to rest next year on their way north. I’ll be there to count them.

Judy Roe



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 (cinrancy@ksu.edu)
Also available on the World Wide Web at the URL <http://www.ksu.edu/audubon/falcon.html>

Subscription Information:

Introductory memberships - \$20 per year; then basic membership is \$35 annually. 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**. New membership applications may be sent to NFHAS at the address below; make checks payable to the National Audubon Society. Membership Renewals are handled by the National Audubon Society and should not be sent to NFHAS. Questions about membership? Call toll-free, 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 per year. 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 Listserv. Send this message **<subscribe KSBIRD-L>** to this address **<listserv@ksu.edu>** and join in the discussions!

NFHAS Board

President:	Judy Roe	539-5519
Vice President:		
Secretary		
Treasurer:	Jan Garton	539-3004

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership:	Carla Bishop	539-5129
Program:		
Conservation:		
Northeast Park	Jacque Staats	
Education:	Madonna Stallmann	
	Richard Pitts	
Fieldtrips:	Patricia Yeager	776-9593
Land Preservation:	Jan Garton	539-3004
Public Outreach:	Dolly Gudder	537-4102
Newsletter:	Cindy Jeffrey	468-3587
At-Large Board Members:	John Tatarko, Ingrid Neitfeld, Paul Weidhaas	

Audubon of Kansas Trustee: Hoogy Hoogheem

Addresses & Phone numbers of Your Elected Representatives (anytime)

Write ✉ - or call ☎

Governor Kathleen Sebelius: 2nd Floor, State Capitol Bldg., Topeka KS 66612. Kansas Senator or Representative _____: State Capitol Bldg., Topeka KS 66612, Ph.# (during session only) - Senate: 785-296-7300, House: 785-296-7500. Senator Roberts <http://roberts.senate.gov> or Brownback: US Senate, Washington DC 20510. Representative _____: US House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515. U.S. Capitol Switchboard : 202-224-3121. President G.W. Bush, The White House, Washington DC 20500. Information about progress of a particular piece of legislation can be obtained by calling the following numbers: In Topeka - 800-432-3924; in Washington - 202-225-1772. Audubon Action Line - **800-659-2622**, or get the latest on WWW at <http://www.audubon.org/campaign/aa/> To find out who represents you go to: www.capitolconnect.com/audubon/mylegis